CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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IBC WORLD NEWS
CH ABC
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'Ind-Netherlands RE tie to boost clean energy Innovation' P10

Climate change risks quadrupling Australian homelessness P11

Tim David Backs Kohli's Temperament after Lean Patch P12

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Modi wraps up Netherlands visit with 17 accords

India and Netherlands elevated ties to a strategic partnership, with agreements spanning semiconductors, green hydrogen, defence co-op and critical tech

AMSTERDAM

Prime Minisater Narendra Modi's visit to the Netherlands has emerged as one of the most significant of his ongoing five-nation Europe and West Asia tour, coming at a time when the world is facing economic uncertainty, energy insecurity and growing geopolitical tensions.

The visit, held between 16th and 17th May at the invitation of Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten, came shortly after he visited the UAE.

During the visit, India and the Netherlands decided to elevate their ties to a full-fledged "Strategic Partnership", while announcing 17 major outcomes across sectors ranging from semiconductors and defence to agriculture, water management, education and cultural heritage.

One of the biggest highlights of the visit was the return of the historic Chola-era copper plates to India after centuries, a move widely seen as a major diplomatic and cultural victory for New Delhi.

Prime Minister Jetten additionally announced that the Netherlands would join the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), signalling stronger Dutch engagement in the Indo-Pacific region alongside India.

Following the talks, the two countries signed 14 agreements and Memoranda of Understanding covering technology, green energy, trade, mobility, education, culture and WAH sectors.

Prime Minister Modi also invited Prime Minister Jetten to visit India, an invitation that was accepted by the Dutch leader.

Outcomes of PM Modi's Netherlands visit

1. Roadmap of India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership (2026-2030)
2. Restitution of Chola copper plates
3. MoU on mobility and migration between India and Netherlands
4. MoU between TATA Electronics and ASML
5. MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Critical Minerals
6. LoI for technical cooperation on the Kalpasar Project
7. Roadmap on the development of Green Hydrogen Cooperation
8. Joint working group on renewable energy
9. Joint statement of intent between NITI Aayog and the Netherlands
10. Indo-Dutch centre of excellence for flowers in West Tripura
11. Indo-Dutch Center of Excellence on Training in Dairy at the Center of Excellence for Animal Husbandry in Bengaluru
12. Collaboration in animal husbandry and dairying
13. LoI between the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)
14. Customs Mutual Administrative Assistance Agreement (CMAA)
15. MoUs on Higher Education
16. Nalanda University–University of Groningen ties
17. Leiden University Libraries–ASI collaboration

Bengaluru gains big, gets Indo-Dutch Center of Excellence on Dairy Training

India and Netherlands signed a joint declaration between the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature of the Netherlands as well as the establishment of an Indo-Dutch Center of Excellence on Training in Dairy at the Center of Excellence for Animal Husbandry (CEAH) in Bengaluru of Karnataka. Both sides agreed to continue to explore cooperation in Dairy and other allied agricultural sectors including food processing.

Rajdhani Express coach catches fire in MP, probe ordered

The Rajdhani Express was heading to Delhi from Thiruvananthapuram

RATLAM

A massive fire broke out in Thiruvananthapuram-Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district early on Sunday.

The coach, carrying 68 passengers, was evacuated within 15 minutes and there were no casualties, according to the railway officials. Meanwhile, a van carrying repair and other equipment to the site later overturned in the district, injuring five railway staffers, they said.

According to railway officials, the blaze was reported around 5.15 am in the B-1 coach of train number 12431, which was travelling from Thiruvananthapuram to Delhi.

The incident occurred between Vikramgarh Alot and Lunirichha stations under the Kota railway division, Ratlam division PRO Mukesh Kumar said. The train had departed from Ratlam Junction at around 3.45 am.

Following the incident, the railways has ordered a high-level enquiry to ascertain the cause of the fire, along with a nationwide audit of fire safety systems and related mechanisms in train coaches across the Indian Railways network.

The train guard first noticed flames emerging from the compartment and alerted the loco pilot, following which the train was stopped and emergency evacuation procedures were initiated.

Railway authorities immediately shut down the overhead electric supply and launched firefighting operations. The blaze also spread to the second luggage-cum-guard van (SLR) attached behind the B-1 coach.

Schedules of more than 10 trains on the Mumbai-Delhi route were affected due to damage caused to the overhead equipment in the incident. Rail traffic was later restored after more than seven hours.

The affected coach was later detached from the rake, and the train headed for its onward journey at around 9.45 am, officials said.

Arrangements were made to accommodate the passengers in other coaches for their onward journey up to Kota in Rajasthan, Kota railway PRO Ravindra Lakhara said.

Drone strike sparks fire at UAE's Barakah nuclear power plant

ABU DHABI

A drone strike targeted the United Arab Emirates' sole nuclear power plant on Sunday, sparking a fire on its perimeter.

There were no reports of injuries or radiological release, but it highlighted the risk of renewed war as the Iran ceasefire remains tenuous.

No one immediately claimed responsibility, and the UAE did not blame anyone. It has however accused Iran of launching drone and missile attacks in recent days as tensions rise over the Strait of Hormuz, a vital energy waterway still gripped by Iran, which is under a US naval blockade.

The UAE has hosted air defenses and personnel from Israel, which joined the US in the February 28 attack that sparked the war.

Why Barakah so special?

The $20 billion Barakah nuclear power plant was built by the UAE with the help of South Korea and went online in 2020. It is the only nuclear plant in the Arab world and can provide a quarter of the energy needs in the UAE, a federation of seven sheikhdoms that is home to Dubai.

'Symi' reaches Kandla port via Hormuz

New Delhi: A Marshall Islands-flagged vessel carrying 20,000 metric tonnes of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) arrived at Deendayal Port Authority in Kandla late on Saturday, successfully navigating the volatile Strait of Hormuz amid the ongoing West Asia crisis.The MV SYMI, which departed from Qatar, docked at the port around 11:30 pm on Saturday after crossing the strategic waterway on May 13, the Shipping Ministry officials said here on Sunday. This arrival comes as India continues to maintain its energy supply chain despite heightened tensions in the region.Since early March, 13 India-flagged vessels — including 12 LPG tankers and one crude oil tanker — have crossed the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of the world's energy supplies pass.

Sweden confers Royal Order of Polar Star on PM Modi

GOTHENBURG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred with Sweden's prestigious 'Royal Order of the Polar Star' Commander Grand Cross honour during his visit to the Nordic nation.

The Royal Order of the Polar Star is among Sweden's highest honours awarded to foreign citizens and distinguished global leaders. The Commander Grand Cross is regarded as the top category of the order and is presented to heads of government and senior dignitaries for their contribution to international diplomacy, cooperation and bilateral relations.

With this recognition, PM Modi has now received a total of 31 international honours from foreign governments and institutions, reflecting India's growing global influence and his expanding diplomatic outreach on the world stage.

The honour comes during PM Modi's visit to Sweden, where he held bilateral talks with Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson. The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in trade, technology, green transition, innovation and strategic partnership between the two countries.

Observers view the award as a symbol of the deepening India-Sweden relationship and a sign of expanding cooperation between the two nations across economic, technological and diplomatic sectors.

Earlier, in a special diplomatic gesture, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson received Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Gothenburg Landvetter Airport on Sunday as he arrived in the Nordic country for the third leg of his five-nation European tour.

In another significant gesture, Swedish Gripen fighter jets escorted Modi's aircraft after it entered Swedish airspace.

Govt raises SC judges strength from 33 to 37 by ordinance

NEW DELHI

The Centre has promulgated an ordinance to immediately increase the number of judges in Supreme Court from 33 to 37, days after the union cabinet decided to bring a Bill in Parliament.

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance 2026 was signed by President Murmu on Saturday, according to the notification published in the official gazette. As per the ordinance, "In section 2 of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956, for the word 'thirty-three', the word 'thirty-seven' shall be substituted." This will be excluding the Chief Justice of India.

Article 123 empowers the President to promulgate ordinances on the recommendation of the Cabinet when Parliament is in recess. However, the ordinance will lapse if the government cannot get it passed in Parliament within six months or within six weeks of the reassembly of the Parliament.

FUEL SHOCK

Travel set to get costlier as pvt bus fares to jump by 20% from May 20

BENGALURU

Following the hike in diesel prices, private bus operators in Karnataka are set to increase fares by 10-20% starting May 20.

Some operators have already rolled out the revised fares. For instance, the fare for the Bengaluru-Mangaluru route, which was Rs 899, has risen to Rs 1,100 to 1,200 on a popular booking website. However, the hike will fully come into effect across the state later this week.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said only operators with All India Tourist Permits (AITP) — issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways — were raising the fares. Stage carriage permit holders, who come under the state Transport Department, can't raise fares, he said.

"We won't allow stage carriage permit holders to raise fares. We are monitoring them. The Centre should rein in AITP operators," he said.

Reddy added that government bus fares would not increase. "We will be making losses but won't burden the people," he said.

The Federation of Karnataka State Private Bus Association defended the move, stating that operating under the older pricing structure is no longer financially viable.

T G Chandra Shekar, general secretary of the Karnataka State Bus Association, indicated that the fare revision will account for market volatility in the coming days. "We decided to increase fares by Rs 150-200 for journeys spanning 300-400 km. There is a strong possibility that diesel prices may go up again next week, and we have to adjust our ticket prices accordingly," Shekar said.

S Nataraj Sharma, president of the Karnataka State Bus Owners' Association (KSBOA), emphasised that the burden is not restricted to the increasing fuel price alone. Operators are facing an aggressive rise in overhead costs with very little relief from regulatory bodies. "The fare hike is not just due to the diesel price rise. A recent 5% increase in toll charges is affecting our margins. Also, we are paying hefty quarterly road taxes ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.9 lakh. Despite this, we have not received any leeway or subsidies from either the state or the central government," Sharma said.

Cabinet approves ₹7.42 cr ancillary works at Kukke Subrahmanya

BENGALURU

The state government has given a go ahead to the managing committee of the Kukke Sri Subrahmanya Temple in Dakshina Kannada to execute several ancillary works to complement the ₹604.65 crore Phase III master plan works.

These ancillary works are estimated to cost ₹7.42 crore to be borne through the temple funds, Minister for Transport and Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments Department, Ramalinga Reddy said.

While seven works would be executed by the PWD under deposit-mode, four (public toilet blocks) would be executed by the temple committee itself by inviting tenders and five would be executed through the Dakshina Kannada Nirmithi Kendra.The project includes infrastructure upgrades to accommodate thousands of devotees, including three new Yaga Shalas, an Anna Dasoha dining hall, and 1,000+ new rooms.

QUICK READ

JD(S) wants changes in certain provisions in ONOE

BENGALURU

The JD(S) has requested its ally BJP to make changes in certain provisions of the proposed 129th Constitutional Amendment Bill linked to the ONOE proposal, particularly the special powers proposed to be given to the ECI to recommend postponement of elections in any state. The Parliamentary Joint Committee held discussions with political parties in Bengaluru on Saturday regarding the Constitution Amendment Bill connected to 'One Nation-One Election' and sought their suggestions and opinions.

Anand Marriage Act in Sikkim from June 1

NEW DELHI

The Anand Marriage Act, which enables Sikh couples to register their traditional marriages under their own specific legal framework, will come into force in Sikkim from June 1, the Union law ministry said. This will allow members of the Sikh community in Sikkim to register their marriages solemnised under the traditional 'Anand Karaj' ceremony directly. For registration purpose, several Sikh couples register their marriage under the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955.

Muslims must refrain from cow sacrifice: Cleric

KOLKATA

The imam of Kolkata's iconic Nakhoda Mosque on Sunday asked Muslims to refrain from cow sacrifice to respect Hindu sentiments and said the recent West Bengal government notification has made animal slaughter very difficult in the absence of proper localised infrastructure. "If the government cannot provide the required infrastructure, then it should declare cow the national animal while imposing a complete ban on its slaughter and beef exports," Maulana Mohammad Shafiq Qasmi told reporters.

Sri SIDDARAMAIAH
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

ಸಾರಿಗೆ ಇಲಾಖೆ
TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT
THREE YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT
MILESTONES

Sri D.K. SHIVAKUMAR
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Construction of **15** new Regional Transport Offices at a cost of **₹70.12** crore I Construction of 6 additional new RTOs in progress at a cost of **₹39.25** crore.

Automated/ Computerised Driving Test System (ADTS)

Establishment of Automated Driving Test Tracks at **45** different locations across the state at a cost of **₹266.00** crore

High Security Registration Plates (HSRP)

Installation of High Security Registration Plates for over **59** lakh vehicles across Karnataka

Geo-Fencing

Implementation of Geo-Fencing based m-Vahan Fitness App across **66** RTOs I Fitness Certificates issued only after successful inspection

Automated Vehicle Inspection Centres

Construction of Automated Vehicle Inspection Centres at **12** locations under the DBFOT model and **20** locations under the BOO model under the PPP scheme is in progress

Smart Enforcement

Installation of AI-based cameras at **7** toll plazas on major national highways at a cost of **₹5.65** crore and at **80** additional locations at a cost of **₹70.00** crore is in progress

Centralized Printing Facility (CPF)

Microchip-based RC and DL Smart Card system with centralized printing facility I Karnataka ranks **4th** in implementation of this project

Heavy Vehicle Driver Training Institutes

Heavy Vehicle Driver Training Institutes established at Bengaluru, Dharwad, Kalaburagi and Mangaluru at a cost of **₹46.00** crore I Construction of institutes at Ballari, Vijayapura, Nagamangala and Shivamogga at a cost of **₹21.00** crore is in progress

Contactless / Online Services

Sarathi - **15** Contactless Services
Sarathi - **16** Non-Contactless Services
Vahan - **9** Contactless Services
Vahan - **12** Non-Contactless Services

Retro Reflective Tape

Installation of **Retro Reflective Tape and Rear Marking Plates** in vehicles to reduce accidents

Seizing Yard

Seizing Yard established by KSRTC at Chandapura, Bengaluru at a cost of **₹1.48** crore I Construction of Seizing Yards at Devanahalli, Bengaluru and Mangaluru at a cost of **₹7.58** crore is in progress

Karnataka Motor Transport and Other Related Workers Social Security and Welfare Board

The Transport allied Workers Board is presently functioning under the Labour Department I Approval has been obtained from the Cabinet for bringing it under the Transport Department. It will be brought under the jurisdiction of the Transport Department after obtaining approval in the upcoming Legislative Assembly I Provision of scholarship assistance, accident compensation, natural death compensation and funeral assistance, marriage assistance, maternity benefits for beneficiaries/spouses, educational assistance for children, provident fund, housing and old-age home facilities

Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF) Policy

Implementation of the RVSF scheme for scrapping old polluting vehicles I A total of **11,368** vehicles scrapped so far

New Software for Pollution Under Control (PUC) Certificate

Inspection of **5,95,000** vehicles and issuance of certificates

Driver Drowsiness & Attention Warning System (DD & AWS)

Installation of Driver Drowsiness & Attention Warning Systems in **300** KSRTC buses at a cost of **₹2.50** crores for early identification of Driver drowsiness / behaviour to avoid accidents

Vehicle Location Tracking Device (VLTD) & Emergency Button Project

Installation of VLTD and Panic Button system as per Central Government - MORTH (Ministry of Road Transport & Highways) guidelines in **2,25,560** public service vehicles to enhance safety of women and children I Establishment of Command and Control Centre at the Office of the Transport Commissioner at a cost of **₹22.00** crore.

Hon'ble Transport & Muzrai Minister **Sri Ramalinga Reddy** participated in the programme of Road Safety Campaign

As enshrined in our Constitution, - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

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Sri SIDDARAMAIAH
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

KARNATAKA TRANSPORT THREE YEARS JOURNEY OF PROGRESS

Sri D.K. SHIVAKUMAR
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

Induction of New Buses

Approval accorded for induction of **7800** new buses Inducted **5998** buses (KSRTC-**1286** (EV Bus- **50**), BMTC-**2329** (EV Bus- **1730**), NWKRTC-**1210**, KKRTC-**1173**)

Project Majestic

Plan initiated for construction of **'Transport Hub'** in Bengaluru Majestic Bus Station under Public and Private Partnership

SALARY REVISION

Salary hike of **12.5%** for **1.05** lakh employees, Additional expenditure of ₹ **72.80** crore per month and ₹ **873.64** crore per year for the four transport corporations

MARCH 2023 SALARY REVISION ARREARS

Approval has been given for ₹ **1,271.92** crore towards arrears payment of salary revision and the first installment of ₹ **450** crore has been released

National and International Awards for State Road Transport Corporations

1997-2026 **694** | May 2023 - May2026 **245**

Women's ridership under the Shakti Scheme has entered the world records

NEW RECRUITMENT

Recruited **10497** staff–Direct recruitment of **9000** and **1497** appointments completed on compassionate ground

BUS REFURBISHING

2109 buses refurbished

BUS TRIPS

Daily Bus trips increased from **154955** to **186506**

DHWANI SPANDANA

A friendly initiative for **visually challenged passengers**

BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT WORKS

Initiated construction of Bus Terminal at Mysuru City at a cost of ₹ **120** Cr. I Construction of bus stations in Belgaum, Hubli and Dharwad I **31** Bus Terminals I **12** Bus Depots I Charging stations for electric vehicles at **12** locations/Depots I **10** Staff Quarters and **02** Training Centres were constructed / upgraded across the state I Under the **Smart City Mission,** bus stations at Belgaum, Tumakuru (Phase 1), Davanagere and Betur Road have been redeveloped

BUS BRANDING

Ashwamedha I Pallakki I Ambaari Utsav I Kalyana Ratha I Airavat Club Class 2.0 I Amoghavarsha I Raja Ratha

KSRTC AROGYA

Health treatment at **280+** Empanelled Hospitals for employees and their dependants, unlimited cashless medical treatment, till date **1,86,973** Claims and ₹ **55.02** Crore I Medical reimbursement ₹ **16** Cr. per annum

SARIGE SURAKSHA / FAMILY WELFARE INSURANCE SCHEME

Compensation paid ₹ **1 Cr.** / ₹ **50** lakh/ ₹ **30** lakh to the dependents of the deceased employees during accident (on duty / off duty) of ₹ **66.50** Crore I Compensation increased from ₹ **3** lakh to ₹ **14** lakh for other than accidental deaths. Total paid ₹ **93.28** Crore

SRI JAYADEVA INSTITUTE OF CARDIOVASCULAR SCIENCES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE

18,758 Heart check-up of staff, Open Heart Surgery for **10** staff and implanted stunt for **42** staff, treatment worth ₹ **50.56** Lakhs

SARIGE MITRA (HRMS 2.0)

Transparency/uniformity in employees leave and attendance, comprehensive services records, EPF Information.

TRAINING

Effective Training Action Plan initiated and **33482** staff trained during the last one year

SARIGE VIDYA CHETHANA / VIDYA SPOORTHI

Scholarship amount increased for children of the employees and distributed ₹ **4.25** Crore

DIGITAL INITIATIVES

AWATAR 4.0 with UPI Digital payment in buses I **52**% UPI payments I Inventory Management (E-Ugrana) I 'Namma BMTC' mobile app I Land Beat App I E-Vanijya I Vayuvya Snehi I Namma Kalaburagi I Accident Management Software I E-Malige I Nyaya Patha

Sri Ramalinga Reddy, Hon'ble Minister, Transport and Muzrai issued the appointment order for the newly appointed crew

MOBILE WORKSHOP / METRO FEEDER SERVICE

Emergency Accident Response Vehicle I Mobile workshops deployed I **241** Metro feeder buses I **12** Package Tours I **142** Express I **33** Nice Road Services I **10292** daily additional trips

KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATIONS

ACCOMPLISHED AS PROMISED

As enshrined in our Constitution, - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

QUICK READ

Special Puja Held on Amavasya at Hoskote Temples

Bengaluru

Special homa and puja rituals were conducted at the Sri Veerabhadraswamy Temple on the occasion of Amavasya. As part of the monthly tradition, a special Rudra Homa was performed in the temple with the participation of 14 couples. The deity was adorned with elaborate flower decorations, attracting a large number of devotees to the temple premises. Similar special rituals and floral decorations were also organised at the Sri Someshwara Temple. Office-bearers of the Sri Veerabhadraswamy Foundation, devotees and local residents participated in the religious programme in large numbers and offered prayers on the auspicious occasion.

Factory Worker Arrested for Killing Girlfriend near Lake

Bengaluru

A 27-year-old factory worker was arrested for allegedly strangling his girlfriend to death after she reportedly threatened to file a rape case against him over his refusal to marry her. According to police, the accused, Rathan Das, a resident of Hebbagodi in Electronics City, was in a relationship with Anjali Nath, a 47-year-old domestic worker. Both were natives of Assam. Police said the incident took place near Tirupalya Lake on the night of May 9 when the two were sitting together and discussing marriage. During the argument, Anjali allegedly threatened to file a rape complaint against Das after he refused to marry her. Enraged, the accused allegedly strangled her to death, abandoned the body near the lake and fled the spot. Police later traced and arrested the accused during the investigation.

EV Rider Dies after Crashing Into Truck on Highway

Bengaluru

A 57-year-old electric bike rider was killed after his vehicle rammed into a truck on the rain-soaked Bengaluru-Nelamangala highway near Huskur Cross. The deceased was identified as PM Lokesh, a sales executive and resident of Basaveshwaranagar. Police said the accident occurred while he was travelling towards Bengaluru during heavy rain. According to investigators, the truck moving ahead applied sudden brakes on the slippery road. Lokesh reportedly lost control of his EV bike and crashed into the rear side of the truck, suffering fatal injuries on the spot. The truck driver fled after the accident, abandoning the vehicle.

DKS Hits Back at Kumaraswamy Over Real Estate Allegations

Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar launched a sharp attack on H. D. Kumaraswamy, accusing his family of acquiring large-scale properties through real estate dealings and intimidating landowners during previous administrations.

BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar strongly countered allegations and criticism made by JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy, claiming that Kumaraswamy's family itself amassed vast properties through real estate transactions linked to the Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) project.

Shivakumar dismissed Kumaraswamy's claims that the JD(S) would independently return to power in Karnataka, describing such statements as "daydreaming."

Shivakumar questioned Kumaraswamy's opposition to projects such as the proposed Bidadi Township and alleged that the former chief minister himself had initiated several real estate-related notifications during his tenure.

"Who started the Bidadi Township proposal? He himself issued the notification. His family has done real estate business using the PRR road issue," Shivakumar alleged.The Deputy Chief Minister further claimed that landowners in areas such as Dodda Gubbi and Chikka Gubbi were pressured into registering properties at low prices during earlier years. According to him, lands purchased for a few lakhs are now worth

several crores due to rapid urban expansion in Bengaluru.

He also rejected criticism over the Congress government's policies regarding property account conversion fees, asserting that the current administration is working for the welfare of ordinary citizens and improving governance in Bengaluru.

"The Congress government has come to power and is working for the people. Citizens are benefiting from our programmes," he said.

Shivakumar accused opposition parties of focusing solely on criticism instead of addressing issues such as rising fuel and cooking gas prices. He questioned whether previous governments had taken adequate measures to support poor families or improve drinking water infrastructure in the city.Highlighting initiatives undertaken by the Congress government, Shivakumar said steps were being taken to correct property records and strengthen civic administration through the formation of five corporations for Bengaluru city governance.

He also claimed that even some BJP leaders privately appreciated the developmental work being carried out by the state government, adding that criticism against him stemmed from political jealousy.

Responding to remarks by former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda regarding power-sharing discussions, Shivakumar said those making such comments should first reflect on political decisions taken within their own family before criticising others.

Yelahanka Set or Rs 6,000-Crore Elevated Railway Coaching Terminal

BENGALURU

Yelahanka is set to witness a major railway infrastructure boost with plans for a massive Rs 6,000-crore elevated mega coaching terminal, which railway officials say could become the first project of its kind in the country.

According to senior officials of the South Western Railway, the final location survey for the ambitious project has already been sanctioned and a detailed study is currently underway. Officials stated that construction work will begin once the Detailed Project Report (DPR) receives approval from the Railway Board.The terminal is planned in two phases to address Bengaluru's rapidly growing railway traffic and improve train handling capacity across the city.

Cabinet Panel Formed to Examine State Education Policy Report

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has constituted a cabinet sub-committee to examine the final report submitted by the State Education Policy (SEP) Commission and recommend further action on its key findings and proposals.

The six-member panel will be headed by Home Minister G. Parameshwara. Other members of the committee include Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H. K. Patil, Social Welfare Minister H. C. Mahadevappa, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, Medical Education and Skill Development Minister Dr Sharan Prakash R. Patil and Higher Education Minister M. C. Sudhakar.

According to an official memorandum issued by the Cabinet Secretariat, the decision to form the sub-committee was taken during the cabinet meeting held on May 7.

The panel has been entrusted with scrutinising the recommendations made by the SEP Commission and submitting its observations and recommendations to the state government for further consideration.

The Higher Education Department has been directed to provide all required administrative and secretarial assistance to the committee in accordance with the Karnataka Government (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1977.The State Education Policy Commission was constituted after the Karnataka government decided to formulate its own education policy tailored to the state's academic, social and regional requirements. The commission recently submitted its final report to the government for review and implementation consideration.

Hoskote Emerges as East Bengaluru's Next Real Estate Growth Hub

Hoskote records 115 percent growth, attracting buyers with affordability, STRR and metro plans, though infrastructure gaps and modest rental returns still make it a long-term investment destination.

BENGALURU

Hoskote is rapidly transforming into one of East Bengaluru's fastest-growing real estate corridors, recording a remarkable 115 percent rise in property values in recent years and drawing comparisons with the early growth phase of Whitefield.

Once viewed as a distant peripheral town, Hoskote is now emerging as a preferred residential destination for homebuyers and investors seeking affordability and long-term appreciation potential. Real estate experts say the area is benefiting from strong infrastructure expansion, improving connectivity and spillover demand from saturated micro-markets such as Whitefield and ITPL.

The locality's strategic location near major employment hubs in East Bengaluru has become one of its biggest strengths. Hoskote enjoys connectivity to established IT corridors, including International Tech Park Bengaluru (ITPL) and Whitefield, while proposed metro expansion under the Purple Line is expected to further improve accessibility for daily commuters.

Affordability remains the primary factor driving demand. While residential prices in Whitefield have climbed to nearly Rs 13,800 per sq.ft., properties in Hoskote are still available in the range of Rs 7,100 to Rs 7,400 per sq.ft. This significant price gap has attracted first-time buyers as well as investors searching for comparatively affordable options within Bengaluru's expanding eastern corridor.

The arrival of reputed developers such as Sobha Realty and Godrej Properties has further boosted confidence in the market. Several premium residential projects featuring gated communities and modern amenities are now reshaping the area's image from a semi-rural town to an emerging urban residential hub.

Infrastructure projects are also expected to play a major role in Hoskote's future growth. The proposed Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) and Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) are projected to significantly reduce travel time to key parts of Bengaluru, including Kempegowda International Airport. Industry estimates suggest these projects could cut commuting time by nearly 30 to 40 percent.East Bengaluru's overall housing market has also witnessed robust momentum, with housing sales reportedly touching nearly Rs 42,800 crore in 2025.However, experts caution that Hoskote is still in a developmental phase and not yet comparable to Whitefield in terms of urban maturity. The area currently lacks the scale of social infrastructure available in established neighbourhoods, including premium schools, multi-speciality hospitals and major retail destinations. Rental yields also remain relatively modest at around 3 percent, indicating that the locality is still evolving primarily as a long-term investment market rather than an immediate rental hotspot.

Ashwini Vaishnaw Flags Off Bengaluru–Mumbai Express, Announces Rail Expansion Plans

BENGALURU

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw virtually flagged off the new Train No. 16553/54 SMVT Bengaluru–Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express, strengthening rail connectivity between Karnataka and Maharashtra.Addressing the event virtually, Vaishnaw said several long-pending railway demands of North and South Karnataka were now being fulfilled. He also announced that a Vande Bharat Sleeper service between Bengaluru and Mumbai is expected to commence soon.Highlighting railway infrastructure growth in Karnataka, the minister said 61 railway stations are being redeveloped under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme at a cost of Rs 2,160 crore, with nine projects already completed. He noted that Bengaluru Cantonment Railway Station is being redeveloped at Rs 485 crore, while Yesvantpur Junction Railway Station is undergoing redevelopment worth Rs 367 crore.

Vaishnaw stated that nearly 1,750 km of new railway lines have been constructed in Karnataka since 2014 and major electrification projects, including the Hassan–Mangaluru section, are nearing completion.wHe further said work on all four corridors of the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project is progressing steadily, with land acquisition completed for key stretches. The suburban rail network is expected to improve connectivity to major hubs such as the airport, Electronic City, Marathahalli and Hebbal.The minister also revealed that Karnataka currently operates 12 pairs of Vande Bharat trains and announced that bullet train corridors connecting Bengaluru with Hyderabad and Chennai have been approved.

Music Talent Shines at Bengaluru Singing Contest, Winners Felicitated

BENGALURU

A colourful singing competition was organised at the Bhairavarag Musical Academy auditorium near Vijayanagara Metro Station, drawing enthusiastic participation from singers and music lovers across the city.The programme was organised under the guidance of Dr G. R. Krishnappa, founder of Saint Flower School and principal of Siddalingaiah Sri Vidyalakshmi International School. Addressing the gathering, Dr Krishnappa highlighted the importance of music education for children and said singing plays a vital role in improving learning abilities and confidence among students.He said children at his school are introduced to singing from a young age, which helps them learn languages such as English more effectively and encourages them to enjoy attending school. He also praised teachers for nurturing children with affection and care similar to that of a mother.Dr Krishnappa appreciated the large audience turnout and said such cultural activities create a positive atmosphere for children and encourage artistic talent. He honoured the winners of the singing competition with certificates and mementoes and assured continued support for organising similar programmes in future.Speaking on the occasion, organisers said music had become a meaningful hobby for many participants and noted that several singers trained at the academy were now performing on bigger stages. They added that karaoke and light music training was being provided to aspiring singers and described music as a "divine medicine" capable of bringing happiness and peace to people of all age groups.Sujatha Bhairava and other members of the academy honoured guests and participants during the event. Winners were also presented with the title of "Bhairava Star Singer."Several guests and music enthusiasts, including Dr Padmanabhan, Vijayalakshmi, Jagadish Kumar, Hansgeetha, Shashi Bhushan, Smithabhushan, Suma, Sudha, Harini, Nitya Shankar, Venkatesh Murthy, Devaraj, Praveen, Prakash and Sangamesh, attended the programme along with members of the public.

GBA POLL COMPLICATION

Guv's Secretariat Pushes Govt for Timely Civic Polls

BENGALURU

The Governor's Secretariat has urged the Karnataka government to ensure that the Bengaluru local body elections are conducted before June 30, in line with directions issued by the Supreme Court, and has called for immediate allocation of funds, manpower and logistical support to the State Election Commission (SEC).In a communication dated May 13 addressed to Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, Special Secretary to the Governor R. Prabhu Shankar referred to a memorandum submitted by the State Legal Cell of the Janata Dal (Secular) along with a group of advocates seeking the Governor's intervention in ensuring smooth conduct of the elections.The letter highlighted the Supreme Court's directive instructing the State Election Commission to complete the Bengaluru civic election process before June 30. The Governor's Secretariat noted that failure to comply with the court's order could invite contempt proceedings and lead to legal complications for the authorities concerned.According to the communication, both the Karnataka government and the SEC share equal responsibility in ensuring that the elections are held within the stipulated timeline. The Governor's office stressed that adherence to the apex court's instructions was mandatory and any delay could adversely affect democratic governance in urban local bodies. The Secretariat also underlined the constitutional significance of conducting timely civic polls under the provisions of the 74th Constitutional Amendment, which mandates democratic functioning of urban local governance institutions. It stated that prolonged delays in elections may weaken public confidence and undermine democratic rights of citizens.The letter further pointed out that delays in local body elections could also impact the release of certain Central grants linked to elected urban local bodies, thereby affecting urban development and civic administration.

HC Quashes Lookout Circular against Driver Employed in Saudi Arabia

BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has set aside a Lookout Circular (LOC) issued against a Dakshina Kannada resident employed as a driver in Saudi Arabia, observing that the state cannot deprive a citizen of livelihood in the name of investigation. Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum, in an order passed on April 29, ruled in favour of Abdul Khadar Nihad, a 27-year-old resident of Ulaibettu in Dakshina Kannada district. The court held that the continuation of the LOC was arbitrary and disproportionate, particularly after the petitioner had cooperated with the investigation and was already out on bail.Nihad was facing criminal proceedings under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, in connection with an alleged inflammatory social media post. He was arrested last year upon arriving at Bajpe airport in Mangaluru.Although he was later released on bail and his mobile phone was returned, the LOC remained active, preventing him from travelling back to Saudi Arabia where he was employed.

QUICK READ

BSWML Launches 'Declutter' for Bulky Waste Disposal

BENGALURU

Bangalore Solid Waste Management Limited has launched the "Declutter" software for disposal of old and bulky household waste within Greater Bengaluru Authority limits, CEO Karigowda said. The platform will help residents dispose of items such as old furniture, beds, cupboards, broken sanitary ware, slippers and discarded clothes, which are not collected under the regular door-to-door waste collection system. Officials said improper dumping of such waste on roadsides and public places was affecting cleanliness and creating environmental concerns.

Manuja Veerappa Re-Elected SWAB President Unopposed

BENGALURU

Manuja Veerappa has been re-elected unopposed as president of the Sports Writers' Association of Bengaluru (SWAB) during the association's annual general meeting. Other office-bearers and executive committee members were also elected unopposed. The newly elected office-bearers include G. Unnikrishnan as vice-president, Girish Doddamani as secretary, K. Manjunath Jabagere as joint secretary and N. Sudarshan as treasurer. The executive committee members elected are Vighnesh Bharadwaj, Kaushik Rangarajan, Ashish Pant, Ashwin Achal, Spandan Kaniyar, Chitrangada Datta Choudhary and B.S. Gururaj.

Veteran Theatre Comedian Killed in Road Accident

BENGALURU

Veteran theatre comedian Krishnamurthy (62) died in a road accident involving a motorcycle and a canter vehicle near the Tumakuru-Bengaluru bypass road. According to police, the accident occurred after the bike reportedly lost control due to ongoing road-chipping work. Krishnamurthy was fatally crushed after the motorcycle hit the handle portion of a moving canter vehicle nearby. The entire incident was captured on a CCTV camera installed near the accident spot. Krishnamurthy was well known in theatre circles and had been active as a comedian in stage plays for several years. Police said the Nelamangala Traffic Police Station officials visited the spot and took the canter driver along with the vehicle into custody for questioning.

Political Parties Divided Over 'One Nation, One Election' at Joint Committee Meeting

BJP, Congress, AAP, JD(S) and Left leaders shared opposing views before committee.

BENGALURU

The Joint Parliamentary Committee examining the proposed 'One Nation, One Election' system held consultations with major political parties in Bengaluru, with leaders expressing sharply divided opinions on the proposal for simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.The committee, constituted by the Central Government to study the feasibility of conducting elections to Parliament and State Assemblies together, is on a visit to Bengaluru from May 16 to 19 as part of its nationwide consultations.

Leaders from the Bharatiya Janata Party, Indian National Congress, Aam Aadmi Party, Janata Dal (Secular) and Left parties participated in the discussions and presented their views before the committee.

Senior Congress leaders including Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar, H. K. Patil, Priyank Kharge and former Union Minister M. Veerappa Moily attended the meeting and strongly opposed the proposal.Shivakumar termed the proposal "power-centric and politically motivated," arguing that it would weaken the federal structure and reduce the powers of states. He said the Karnataka Legislative Assembly had already passed a resolution opposing the concept and reiterated the state government's stand before the committee.

Questioning the practicality of synchronising elections across states with different political timelines, Shivakumar cited examples of governments in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Punjab and Telangana, where elections were held at different times due to varying political circumstances.

On the other hand, Karnataka BJP president B. Y. Vijayendra strongly backed the proposal and described it as a "structural necessity" for strengthening democracy.

Vijayendra argued that simultaneous elections would reduce repeated election expenditure, minimise disruption caused by continuous poll cycles and allow governments to focus more on governance and development works rather than constant campaigning.He said the BJP firmly supports the 'One Nation, One Election' concept as an important electoral reform aimed at improving administrative efficiency and reducing financial burden on the exchequer.The committee is expected to continue consultations with various stakeholders during its Bengaluru visit before preparing its recommendations on the proposed electoral reform.

BMRCL Warns Public as Reach-6 Metro Electrification Begins

BENGALURU

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited has issued a public warning ahead of the commencement of underground metro electrification work in Bengaluru's Reach-6 corridor, cautioning citizens against entering restricted sections without authorisation.According to metro officials, the 33kV electrical cables and the 750V DC third rail system in the underground corridor connecting Langford Town and Pottery Town will begin to be energised progressively from May 18 as part of technical preparations for future metro operations.BMRCL stated that the electrification process is a critical stage in activating infrastructure for the underground metro network. The corporation warned that direct contact with the live third rail or high-voltage electrical cables could result in serious injury or even death.

The underground Reach-6 corridor includes several traction substations and auxiliary substations situated near important locations such as Rashtriya Military School, MG Road, Shivajinagar, Cantonment Railway Station and Pottery Town.Officials said the electrification work forms part of the larger underground metro expansion project aimed at strengthening Bengaluru's public transport network and improving connectivity across key parts of the city.In its official notification, BMRCL strictly prohibited unauthorised entry into underground metro sections within the electrified corridor. Authorities stated that only authorised personnel involved in technical and operational work would be permitted access to these restricted areas.The corporation urged residents, pedestrians and workers near metro construction zones to remain alert and avoid entering barricaded underground sections under any circumstances.

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Karnataka Moves to Secure UNESCO Recognition for Historic Lakkundi

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has intensified efforts to secure UNESCO recognition for the historic town of Lakkundi, with Tourism Minister H. K. Patil announcing that a formal proposal will be submitted within the next two months.

Patil said the government has already constituted the Lakkundi Heritage Area Development Authority and a State-Level Advisory Committee to oversee preservation and development activities in the heritage town.

The minister stated that the authority has begun functioning from its headquarters in Gadag and that the state government has undertaken extensive restoration and archaeological initiatives in Lakkundi over the last three years.

The state government is preparing to include Lakkundi in the UNESCO list. Tourism Minister H.K. Patil said that a proposal in this regard will be submitted within two months.

Patil said the first phase of archaeological excavations has already commenced in the region. He revealed that officials had conducted a large-scale public outreach campaign by travelling across the Gram Panchayat limits carrying symbolic palanquins and appealing to villagers to voluntarily hand over ancient artefacts in their possession.

According to him, local residents responded positively and more than 3,000 relics have been collected so far. Initially, around 1,500 artefacts were received, while another 1,400 were later handed over during a public awareness drive that continued beyond the planned one-week programme.

The government has also launched efforts to identify the historic "100 temples and 100 wells" associated with Lakkundi's heritage. As part of the first phase, five temples and five wells have already been unveiled.Patil said that so far 32 temples and 36 wells have been identified, while efforts are underway to trace the remaining structures. The government has fixed a target to complete the identification process by December this year.

Calling it a record achievement, the minister said thousands of artefacts were recovered within a short period through excavation and public cooperation. Plans are also underway to establish an open-air museum on a three-acre site to preserve and display the findings.He further revealed that permission is being sought for additional excavations and restoration of the historic two-kilometre fort wall in Lakkundi. The government has already declared 16 monuments in the area as protected state monuments. Officials said several relics belonging to the Chalukya and Hoysala periods have been discovered, including antique gold ornaments estimated to be nearly 600 years old. A committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner has reportedly valued the ornaments at around Rs 8 crore.

MUSLIM ORGANISATIONS SEEK ACCOUNTABILITY FROM GOVT OVER PENDING ISSUES

BENGALURU

A federation of Muslim organisations in Karnataka demanded answers from the Congress government over what it described as unfulfilled promises made to the community during the past three years of governance.

Representatives of nearly 48 organisations from North and South Karnataka participated in a conference held at Town Hall, where speakers questioned the government on the status of assurances given to the Muslim community.

The conference was organised under the banner of the State Muslim Organisations Federation and focused on issues including Waqf disputes, educational opportunities, reservation concerns and the continuing controversy surrounding the hijab issue.

Participants said several problems affecting the community remain unresolved despite repeated representations to the government.

Addressing the gathering, Tanveer Ahmed said the programme was successful because it witnessed participation from ordinary community members without involving political leaders.

He alleged that fake messages and criticism had been circulated on social media in an attempt to prevent the conference from taking place. However, organisers decided to proceed as the event was aimed at discussing community concerns and promoting unity, he said.

According to Ahmed, those attending the conference had participated voluntarily and not due to political mobilisation or inducements. He said the turnout reflected growing concern and awareness within the community regarding unresolved issues.

Ahmed also criticised what he described as a trend among some community members of limiting themselves to meetings and photographs with political leaders instead of pursuing structured dialogue and policy-based solutions.

"Meeting the Chief Minister or Deputy Chief Minister alone cannot solve the problems of the community. There must be consultation, discussion and a proper process," he said.

He further claimed that legislators and ministers often function within limited circles without consulting activists, legal experts and community representatives. The purpose of the conference, he added, was to encourage wider participation and accountability.

Organisers said politicians and film personalities were deliberately not invited so that discussions could remain focused on community issues rather than political speeches.

Joint convener Haresh Siddiqui clarified that the conference was neither against the Congress party nor organised in support of any political organisation.

"Our intention is only to discuss unresolved issues affecting the Muslim community and plan for the future," he said.Several community leaders and representatives, including Suhail Maroor, Yasin Malpe, Maulana Atiqur Rehman and advocate Muzaffar, attended the programme.

Drunken Brawl near Bar Turns Fatal, Two Drivers Arrested

BENGALURU

A late-night drunken altercation near a bar in Bengaluru's Yeshwanthpur ended in tragedy after a 36-year-old driver died following an alleged assault by two of his colleagues.

The deceased has been identified as Sharannappa, a native of Koppal district who was working as a driver in Bengaluru. Police said the incident occurred on May 10 near a bar located close to Govardhan Theatre in the Yeshwanthpur area.According to investigators, Sharannappa was drinking with two other drivers, identified as Anand and Dakshinamurthy, when an argument reportedly broke out over a family-related issue. The verbal altercation soon escalated into a physical fight outside the bar premises.

Police sources said the two accused allegedly assaulted Sharannappa during the confrontation. He was reportedly pushed and beaten during the quarrel while under the influence of alcohol.Despite the fight, all three men later went to sleep in a nearby shed. However, Sharannappa's health condition reportedly worsened during the night. He was initially shifted to a hospital in Bengaluru for treatment.As his condition became critical, family members later moved him to his hometown in Koppal for further medical care. However, he failed to recover and eventually succumbed to his injuries.Following his death, a case was first registered in Koppal. Since the assault had taken place in Bengaluru, the case was later transferred to the RMC Yard Police Station for investigation.Police have now arrested both Anand and Dakshinamurthy in connection with the case. Officials said the accused are being questioned to establish the exact sequence of events that led to the fatal assault.Investigators are also verifying witness statements and medical reports as part of the probe. Police sources said further legal action will depend on the findings of the postmortem and forensic examination.

The incident has once again highlighted concerns over alcohol-fuelled violence and late-night disputes in the city.

SECURITY LAPSE

Four Foreign Women Escape Refugee Shelter

BENGALURU

A major security concern has surfaced in Bengaluru after four foreign women escaped from a refugee shelter near Chikkagubbi under the limits of Kothanur Police Station by allegedly breaking the grill of a second-floor window.

According to police officials, the women fled from the Home of Hope shelter despite security arrangements at the premises. The incident came to light after staff members noticed the women missing during routine checks.

Authorities identified the escaped women as Topist, Nagawa, Safina and Pithin, believed to be nationals of Uganda and Nigeria.

Officials said the women had been housed at the shelter after being detained for allegedly overstaying in India even after the expiry of their visas. They were among several foreign nationals being temporarily accommodated at the centre.Sources stated that the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) generally keeps such individuals in designated detention centres. However, due to shortage of space in FRRO facilities, several foreign nationals had reportedly been shifted to the shelter near Chikkagubbi.

Authorities said the shelter currently houses individuals from countries including Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and Bangladesh.Investigators also claimed that narcotic substances, including ganja and drugs, had previously been found in possession of some foreign nationals staying at the facility. Officials expressed concern that the escaped women could once again become involved in unlawful activities after fleeing custody.

BMTC Seeks Refund after Excess Salary Arrears Credited to Employees

BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation has found itself in an embarrassing situation after a technical and data entry error led to excess salary arrears being credited to several employees.

According to BMTC officials, nearly 100 conductors mistakenly received arrears for the entire 26-month period instead of the approved first instalment covering only 11 months. The issue reportedly surfaced at Yeshwanthpur Depot-26 after some employees noticed unusually large amounts credited to their bank accounts.The Karnataka government had sanctioned the release of pending salary arrears for employees of state-run transport corporations. As part of the first phase, BMTC was instructed to disburse arrears only for the period from January 2021 to November 2021. However, due to a data entry mistake, some conductors received arrears for the complete 26-month period.

QUICK READ

Rain tree blocks main road in Kanakagiri

CH NEWS, Kanakagiri
A large tree fell on the road leading to Hosagudda village under Hulihaidar Gram Panchayat after heavy rain on Saturday night, officials said. The uprooted tree blocked the road completely and stopped all vehicle movement. Two-wheeler riders and farmers faced difficulty reaching fields as water also collected nearby. Branches spread across the road making passage impossible. Villagers said the tree belongs to the Forest Department and should be removed quickly. They complained that officials had not arrived yet.

Young youth dies after bike hits divider

CH NEWS, Shahabad
Police said a 22-year-old youth died on the spot after his bike hit a road divider near Shahabad in Kalaburagi district on Sunday morning. The deceased has been identified as Muhammad Ibrahim and his friend Abdul Hakim was injured and taken to hospital for treatment. They were travelling on State Highway 150 from Raoor towards Shahabad when an animal suddenly crossed the road causing the rider to lose control. The bike hit the divider and both riders were thrown onto the road with Ibrahim suffering fatal head injuries on the spot.

Monkey attack injures three women in Hebale village

CH NEWS, Hebale
Three women were injured after a monkey attacked near Siddhivinayak temple in Hebale village under Bhatkal taluk officials said on Saturday. The monkey has been entering houses in the area causing panic among villagers including women children and elderly. Locals said they informed forest department and panchayat but no action was taken for over a fortnight. Range Forest Officer Vishwanath Naik said staff tried to catch the monkey but it joined other monkeys making operation difficult.

Dengue awareness drive held at BMTC workshop

Health officials explained dengue symptoms, treatment, and prevention, stressing no water stagnation and public participation in control

BENGALURU

A dengue awareness programme was conducted at the BMTC Central Workshop–02 in Dooravani Nagar under the Bengaluru East City Corporation limits on the occasion of National Dengue Day.

The initiative was organised by the Krishnarajapuram Urban Primary Health Centre with the cooperation of BMTC technical officials. More than 100 workshop employees participated in the health education session aimed at preventing mosquito-borne diseases.

Health officials explained the symptoms of dengue, treatment methods, and preventive measures, stressing the importance of avoiding water stagnation in and around workplaces and homes. They also highlighted the role of public participation in controlling mosquito breeding.

Senior Health Inspector Gururaj addressed the workers and said that awareness and cleanliness are key to preventing dengue outbreaks. He urged employees to regularly inspect surroundings and eliminate potential breeding sites.

A live demonstration on mosquito larvae was also conducted by Senior Health Inspector Shrishaila Kannaal to help workers understand the mosquito life cycle and identify breeding sources. An intensive larval survey was carried out within the workshop premises, including inspection of water storage drums, tyres, buckets, and scrap materials. Health teams, including Inspector Kiran, participated in the inspection drive.

Officials also sprayed larvicidal solution (ABATE) in identified breeding areas to control mosquito growth and reduce health risks. Health department officials said that dengue prevention requires collective effort and regular monitoring of water-collecting objects in public spaces.

They added that such awareness programmes help improve hygiene practices among workers and reduce the risk of seasonal outbreaks. BMTC staff and health workers jointly supported the initiative as part of ongoing public health awareness campaigns across Bengaluru East City Corporation limits.

CH NEWS: Union Defence Minister of India, Rajnath Singh met Shree Sugunendra Theertha Swamijj Udupi Puthige Matha and received the blessings along with Koti Geetha Lekhana Yajna deeksha books, in the auspicious period of Adhika Purushottama maasa New Delhi on Sunday.

Rhythm House summer camp inaugurated in Hunsur

HUNSUR

A summer camp at Rhythm House Dance Studio near the old ITI College in Hunsur Nagar was inaugurated with traditional lamp lighting by yoga trainer Bhargav. Speaking at the event, organisers said students of the studio have achieved excellent results in district, state and national competitions over the years. They added that several students have now been selected to participate at the international level, bringing pride to the institution and local community.

The next international competition is scheduled to take place in Malaysia on June 26, 2026 and participants were wished success for the upcoming event.

Under NRLM Sanjeevini scheme with Udupi Zilla Panchayat, Kalyanpur SHG women will independently manage the cafe operations

Mi highlights importance of women fin independence

UDUPI

State Women and Child Development Minister Lakshmi R. Hebbalkar inaugurated the new Akka Cafe at Malpe Beach on Saturday, highlighting the importance of women's financial independence and community development.

Speaking during the inauguration, Hebbalkar said women become stronger contributors to society when they achieve economic stability through self-employment and entrepreneurship. She described the cafe as more than a food outlet, calling it a symbol of dignity, hard work, and self-respect for women in rural communities.

The project has been launched under the National Rural Livelihood Mission through the Sanjeevini scheme in partnership with Udupi Zilla Panchayat. The cafe will be managed by the Nidhi Sanjeevini Self-Help Group from Kalyanpur, with women members handling operations independently.

Several officials and public representatives attended the event, including Legislative Council member Manjunath Bhandari, District Collector Swaroop T.K., and Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Prateek Bhayal. Officials said the initiative aims to create employment opportunities for women while encouraging tourism and local business activity at Malpe Beach.

Residents welcomed the initiative and expressed hope that similar women-led projects would be introduced in other tourist areas across the district. They said such programmes can improve livelihoods and inspire more women to start small businesses confidently and participate actively in economic development activities within their communities across coastal Karnataka in the coming years with greater support from local authorities and government agencies.

MLA Calls for Anti-Centre Demonstration Over Economic Failures and NEET Scandal

PUTTUR

Puttur MLA Ashok Rai announced that the Congress party will conduct a large protest on May 18, Monday, right opposite Gandhi Katte at the Puttur bus stand. The gathering will focus on the central government's perceived flawed policies that have triggered price rises and allegedly exposed serious shortcomings in governance.

He made this announcement while chairing a preparatory meeting at the Puttur Tourist Home along with senior Congress functionaries from the Puttur, Vittla, and Uppinangady blocks. Rai explained that exorbitant increases in the rates of petrol, diesel, and domestic cooking gas have left common people extremely worried.

"Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the central government has failed to regulate these prices, pushing the country's economic condition to a critical stage. Rather than solving the problems, authorities are directing citizens to stop buying gold, avoid purchasing fertilisers, and reduce fuel consumption, unfairly placing the burden of governmental inefficiency on the shoulders of the people," he said.

The protest will also address the grave NEET question paper leakage incident that has jeopardised the future of lakhs of students. Such leaks continue to happen regularly, which the party views as the government playing with the lives and careers of young aspirants.

The entire demonstration is designed to condemn these failures and educate the public about the shortcomings of the central regime. Leaders present at the meeting were KPCC General Secretary M S Muhammad, KPCC coordinators including Kavu Hemanath Shetty, block presidents Krishna Prasad Alva, Padmanabha Poojary, Y T Tausif, DCC General Secretary Muralidhar Rai Matantabettu, Publicity Committee chief Dr. Rajaram, and other active members such as Kumbra Durgaprasad Rai, Jokindisoja, Ramanath Vittal, Yakub Mular, Asgar Ali Nekkiladi, Mahaling Nayak, Jayaprakash Badiyar, Honbappa Kaindadi, Chandraprabha, Sanath Kumar Rai, Poornesh Bhandari, Vikram Shetty, Sushanth, Sumit Shetty, Ravi Prasad Shetty Bannur along with many more party workers.

City Faces 24-Hour Water Supply Halt for Critical Pipeline Maintenance

MANGALURU

The Mangaluru City Corporation (MCC) has announced a complete 24-hour suspension of drinking water supply across multiple localities in the city, scheduled from 6 AM on Monday, May 18, to 6 AM on Tuesday, May 19.

The outage is necessitated by essential maintenance work at the Thumbe station, specifically involving the installation or replacement of a Non-Return Valve (NRV) on the 1,100-mm-diameter main pipeline originating from the Thumbe LLPS-2 80 MLD pumping station.

Officials urge residents in the affected zones to store adequate water in advance to minimize inconvenience during this period.

The shutdown will impact a wide range of areas, including Padil, Maroli, Kankanady, Mangaladevi, Jeppu, Falnir, Mulihithlu, Bolar, Car Street, Mannagudda, Pandeshwar, State Bank, Shaktinagar, Kannur, Bajal, Jappinamogaru, Alape, Attavar, Ullasnagar, Chilimbi, Kodikal, Urwa Store, Ashoknagar, Kudupu, Vamanjoor, Bondel, Kavoor, and parts of Marakada.

Police host summer camp students for safety awareness

KUNDAPURA

In a proactive step to engage young minds, officers from the Udupi Police welcomed children participating in a summer camp to the local police station.

The group, from G.S. Acharya Rangamandira in Shankaranarayana, took part in an interactive "Open House" session designed to equip them with vital safety knowledge. Senior personnel, including the Kundapura Circle Inspector along with the PSI and ASI from the station's Law and Investigation wing, led the program.

They shared essential information on personal safety and legal awareness in a friendly, accessible format. Children gathered enthusiastically with officers both outside the station and during the indoor discussions, highlighting a warm police-community connection. This initiative reflects the department's ongoing efforts to build trust and educate the younger generation on important civic topics.

Ballari authorities struggle to recover JSW Steel taxes

BALLARI

Local authorities in Ballari district are struggling to recover more than Rs 20 crore in pending taxes from JSW Steel near Torangal in Sandur taluk. Officials said the company owes property and development tax dues accumulated between 2018 and 2026 across multiple gram panchayats. Repeated notices have reportedly been issued, but payment has not been made, creating difficulties for local bodies in collecting revenue. The outstanding amount includes over Rs 20.23 crore for Torangal Gram Panchayat along with dues from Vaddu and Bannihatti areas.

Ballari MLA Bharat Reddy criticized the situation, saying the company should contribute fairly while also supporting local employment and development. He said he will raise the issue with the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister to ensure recovery of public funds. Officials from gram panchayats have stated that recovery efforts will continue as the tax arrears remain a major concern.

Weeks of delayed payments have created pressure on village administrations, which depend on property tax collection for basic civic works such as road maintenance, drinking water supply, and sanitation improvements in rural areas. Residents and officials both say that timely clearance of dues is necessary to avoid disruption of local development projects. Authorities added that discussions are ongoing with company representatives to find an amicable solution while ensuring compliance with tax laws and strengthening financial discipline across the region.

Hakkimakki village sees major wildlife capture operation

CHIKKAMAGALURU

Chikkamagaluru Forest Department officials carried out a major operation and captured a large wild buffalo that had been causing repeated damage to crops in the Malnad region.

The animal was captured near Hakkimakki area in Arunoor village under the Shanbir Aldur forest range after being sedated by veterinary experts at around 6 pm. The captured buffalo was later shifted to the Shivamogga zoo for further monitoring.

Forest officials said the operation was conducted after reports of increasing human–wildlife conflict in the district, especially involving wild buffaloes and elephants entering farmland and destroying crops. Farmers in several villages had also reported injuries and fatalities due to such attacks.

A team led by senior forest officials had earlier studied similar wildlife management

practices in Madhya Pradesh before recommending relocation measures to the state government. Following approval, the department began an operation to capture three problematic wild buffaloes in the Malnad region.

Officials said more than 100 forest personnel, along with veterinary doctors, participated in the operation despite heavy rain and difficult terrain conditions. One buffalo captured earlier could not be transported due to steep terrain and was released back into the forest after sedation. However, the second operation on Saturday was successful.

DYFI slams Congress over health sector privatisation move

MANGALURU

The Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) has criticised the Karnataka Congress government, alleging that it is supporting privatisation in the health sector under the guise of reforms.

DYFI leaders in Dakshina Kannada said the government's decision to enter into agreements with private institutions for services in Belthangady, Bantwal Taluk Hospital, Moodbidri Primary Health Centre and Vitla Community Hospital is a step towards weakening public healthcare.

They alleged that despite repeated demands from DYFI and Left organisations to cancel such contracts, the government is moving ahead without addressing concerns raised by the public. DYFI district president B.K. Imtiaz and secretary Santosh Bajal said that the Congress party claims to strengthen the public health system and provide specialist services in rural areas, but ground reality in many taluks is different.

They pointed out that several taluks, including Ullal, Mulki, Moodbidri and Kadaba, still lack adequate government hospital infrastructure. They also said that even where facilities exist, there is a shortage of doctors or medicines, affecting patient care.

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BALLARI

Local authorities in Ballari district are struggling to recover more than Rs 20 crore in pending taxes from JSW Steel near Torangal in Sandur taluk.

Officials said the company owes property and development tax dues accumulated between 2018 and 2026 across multiple gram panchayats. Repeated notices have reportedly been issued, but payment has not been made, creating difficulties for local bodies in collecting revenue. The outstanding amount includes over Rs 20.23 crore for Torangal Gram Panchayat along with dues from Vaddu and Bannihatti areas.

Ballari MLA Bharat Reddy criticized the situation, saying the company should contribute fairly while also supporting local employment and development. He said he will raise the issue with the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister to ensure recovery of public funds.

Surveyors demand government recognition

VIJAYAPURA

Seventy-seven crop surveyors working under the Agriculture Department in Sindagi taluk for the past eight to ten years have formed a new organisation seeking proper government facilities and recognition. The All Karnataka Crop Surveyors' Organization has been created across the state to support surveyors and address their demands through a united platform.

An inauguration programme for office bearers of the Sindagi taluk branch was held at Gagana Mahal Park in Vijayapur under the leadership of state committee members. During the event, Srishaila Jalawadi was appointed president while Davalalika Bavasaba Mokashi was named another president of the unit. Ravikirana Hosmani became vice president and Shivsharan Hosmani was selected as general secretary.

QUICK READ

Heavy rain alert issued across Karnataka

BENGALURU

The Indian Meteorological Department has issued a seven-day forecast warning of heavy rainfall across several parts of Karnataka, including Bengaluru and both southern and northern interior districts.

Officials said thunderstorms with strong winds are likely in many areas as monsoon activity intensifies across the state. A yellow alert has been declared for the southern interior regions due to expected heavy rain on May 18 and 19, along with lightning and gusty winds.

Bengaluru is likely to experience partly cloudy skies with chances of heavy showers and thunderstorms during evening or night hours, while temperatures may range between 23ºC and 33ºC. The Karnataka State Natural Disaster Management Centre has also warned of continued weather activity in some regions, though conditions may ease slightly after May 20. In northern interior districts such as Belagavi, Dharwad, Haveri and Gadag, moderate rain is expected in isolated areas, while other districts may see cooler evenings. Coastal Karnataka, including Udupi, Dakshina Kannada and Uttara Kannada, is expected to remain largely calm with no major weather warnings issued for the coming week.

Road accident claims life of Kerala visitor

KOLLUR

A collision between a jeep carrying tourists from Kodachadri to Kollur and a tempo near Dali in Kollur left one person from Kerala dead and several others injured, police said on Sunday. The accident occurred when the tourist vehicle was travelling towards Kollur while the tempo was going towards Nagodi from Kollur. Police said one person died while several injured were rushed to nearby hospitals for treatment. Kollur police visited the accident site and hospitals to collect details and registered a case.

Father and two sons drowned in pond

KOLAR

A father and two children drowned in a flooded agricultural pond at Nakkanahalli village in Malur taluk of Kolar district, police said. The deceased have been identified as Srinivas aged 40 and his sons Chetan aged 13 and Rajesh aged 8. They had gone to the pond on Sunday holiday when Srinivas attempted to teach them swimming and they slipped into the water. All three drowned despite efforts and died on the spot. Masti police have registered a case and investigation is underway. Officials visited the spot and shifted bodies for post mortem procedures.

Priyank Kharge demands accountability over student suicides issue

Kharge said he supports the process if done properly, stressing exam students' future protection and demanding inquiry and corrective action

BENGALURU

State Minister Priyank Kharge has alleged that RSS and BJP are involved in NEET question paper rigging.

He said students suicides are a tragedy and demanded accountability from the central government.

He questioned Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and asked why no resignations have been made so far. He also targeted RSS leader Dattatreya Hosabale and accused them of harming students future.

He said the SIR voter list campaign in sixteen states is designed to help BJP win elections.

He alleged that new rules could remove voters from lists in an unconstitutional manner. He urged that electoral processes must follow

constitutional procedures and transparency. He said he is not against the process but wants it to be conducted properly. He further said the future of children who prepare for competitive exams is at stake and needs protection. He demanded strict inquiry into alleged irregularities and immediate corrective action from authorities.

He said public confidence in examinations must be restored through fair investigation.

He reiterated criticism of the SIR campaign calling it politically motivated and unfair. He appealed to authorities to ensure justice for students and transparency in recruitment exams.

He said education system credibility depends on honest administration and accountability. He warned that failure to act could damage trust in national examination bodies. He urged government to respond quickly and address student concerns seriously.

Ashok launches road drainage project in Kempasagar

MAGADI

BDCC Bank Chairman and Bamool Director H.N. Ashok said several permanent development works are progressing rapidly across Magadi taluk with the aim of improving infrastructure and boosting tourism and agriculture in the region.

He was speaking after performing groundwork ceremonies for a concrete road and drainage project worth nearly Rs 50 lakh in Kempasagar village under the Social Welfare Department grant.

Ashok said Kempasagar is a historically important village and currently development works worth around Rs 2.5 crore are underway there. He assured that the ongoing road and drainage projects will be completed within the next fifteen days and opened for public use.

He also announced plans to develop Kempasagar Lake into a tourist destination similar to Bidadi Nelligudde Lake with boating facilities and improved surroundings to attract visitors from nearby towns including Bengaluru,

Ashok said link roads, APMC market, and dairy reforms are planned in Harohalli to improve connectivity, farming income, milk pricing, and cattle insurance support.

Kunigal, Nelamangala and Huliyurdurga.

Ashok said new link roads are being developed around the lake area at a cost of Rs 3 crore to improve village connectivity and transportation facilities for local residents.

He further stated that a modern hi tech APMC market will be constructed near Harohalli village on horticulture department land to help farmers market their produce efficiently.

Speaking on dairy farming issues, he said increasing cattle feed costs and insurance expenses have affected farmers and discussions are underway regarding milk price revision and cattle insurance support through Bamool Trust.

Magadi Block Congress President K. Krishnamurthy urged opposition parties to stop criticism and cooperate in development activities. He said MLA H.C. Balakrishna has given priority to improving rural roads which will help students and farmers travel and transport crops easily.

Several local leaders, contractors and residents attended the programme and reviewed ongoing projects aimed at improving infrastructure and public facilities across Magadi taluk for long term regional development and economic growth in coming years.

MLA Seeks Minority Boys Hostel in Vacant CSC Building

PUTTUR

Congress MLA of Puttur, Ashok Kumar Rai has submitted a written appeal to Housing and Minority Welfare Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan seeking approval for a new minority boys' hostel.

The facility is intended to serve poor and middle-class boys from Puttur town and surrounding rural areas who travel to the city for education. Many students, particularly those coming from distant villages, currently face severe difficulties due to the lack of secure and affordable lodging options. Rai highlighted that the recently built Common Service Centre in Puttur city now stands vacant. Converting this existing structure into a boys' hostel would significantly reduce additional expenditure for the government while ensuring proper use of public infrastructure.

He has therefore requested

the minister to sanction the minority boys' hostel for Puttur taluk and allow it to function within the vacant Common Service Centre premises. It is learnt that Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan has already directed departmental officials to proceed with starting the hostel based on the MLA's request.

When Rai submitted the appeal, Congress District Propaganda Committee President H. Muhammad Ali and Congress leader Roshan Rai Bannur were present alongside him.

Hindu Janajagruti Samiti leads district level gathering

BANTWAL

Speakers at a district-level "Hindu Rashtra Convention" held in Bantwal called for unity among Hindu organisations and urged people to work towards the establishment of a "Hindu Rashtra".

The convention was organised by Hindu Janajagruti Samiti at Geethanjali Kalyana Mantapa with the stated objective of strengthening Hindu unity and promoting the idea of a Hindu nation.

Addressing the gathering, South Karnataka coordinator of the organisation, Chandra Mogaveera, said a "Hindu Rashtra" could become a reality if society embraced dharma and moral values. Drawing a parallel with the establishment of "Ram Rajya" after Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya, he said all Hindu organisations must work collectively with a common purpose.

He said the movement that began in 2012 had grown significantly over the years. According to him, saints and religious leaders had prepared a draft constitution for a "Hindu Rashtra" during the 2025 Kumbh Mela under the guidance of Puri Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati.

He also claimed discussions on the subject were taking place at national forums.

Advocate Prasad Rai expressed concern over what he described as "love jihad", alleging that Hindu women were being targeted through deception.

He urged women to draw inspiration from historical figures such as Rani Lakshmibai and Kittur Rani Chennamma and emphasised self-protection and awareness.

CID DIG Dr. Bhimashankar Guled reviewed Belagavi case, examining seized documents, digital evidence, and meeting senior police officials

CID takes over multi-crore deposit fraud case

BELAGAVI

The investigation into a multi-crore financial fraud case involving Shivam Associates owner Shivananda Neelannavar has been officially transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), with senior officials stepping in to intensify the probe into alleged large-scale deposit collection violations.

Authorities said Neelannavar is accused of collecting deposits worth several crores of rupees from nearly 35,000 people in violation of Reserve Bank of India guidelines. The case, initially handled by the Malamaruti police station in Belagavi, was handed over to the CID following the scale and complexity of the alleged scam.

CID Deputy Inspector General Dr. Bhimashankar Guled visited Belagavi and reviewed the case details, including seized documents and digital evidence. He first met district officials to gather a full briefing before holding a detailed review meeting with senior police officers at the City Police Commissioner's office.

Police officials confirmed that all investigation records, including materials collected during earlier inquiries, were formally transferred to the CID after discussions lasting several hours. The CID team later visited the police station to gather further information and verify case details.

Authorities said the CID is preparing to approach the court on Monday seeking custody of the accused for further interrogation. Once approval is granted, investigators are expected to question him in detail regarding the financial transactions and alleged misuse of deposit schemes.

City Police Commissioner Bhushan Borase said the case involves interstate financial dealings and is valued at more than ₹50 crore, which is why it was escalated to the CID. He said the decision was taken after consultation with senior police leadership and the Director General and Inspector General of Police.

Meanwhile, political leaders have also commented on the case. Minister Satish Jarkiholi said the matter involves serious allegations and must be investigated thoroughly by the CID, noting that cases involving large financial irregularities require specialised investigation.

Former Chief Minister and MP Jagadish Shettar said the matter is under judicial consideration and stressed that conclusions should be drawn only after a full investigation is completed. He added that the CID will examine evidence and present findings before the court.

Officials said the investigation is ongoing and further details, including the involvement of other individuals if any, will emerge as the probe progresses.

Farmer dies after lightning strike near Mudgal

RAICHUR

A 48-year-old farmer lost his life after being struck by lightning during heavy rain and strong winds near Mudgal in Lingasugur taluk of Raichur district.

The deceased has been identified as Kariappa Ayyappa Ganikihala, a resident of Komalapur village. Police said the incident took place while he was loading fertilizer into a tractor near the village school area when sudden lightning struck during intense weather conditions.

He died on the spot, causing shock and panic among nearby farmers and local residents who were present in the area.

Officials from different departments, along with personnel from Mudgal Police Station, visited the location and inspected the scene after the incident.

The body was later shifted to Mudgal Hospital for post-mortem examination. A case has been registered at Mudgal Police Station, and further investigation is underway to understand the exact circumstances of the accident.

Authorities also advised farmers to avoid open fields during thunderstorms and take safety precautions during adverse weather conditions in the region to prevent such tragic incidents in future.

MP Surya highlights need for faster intercity connectivity

BENGALURU

BJP MP Tejaswi Surya has urged the Union government to approve a high-speed rail corridor between Bengaluru and Mumbai via Davangere and Hubballi. He said the project will improve travel, create jobs, and support business growth across Karnataka. He made the request during a railway programme where he participated virtually with Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Minister of State for Railways V. Somanna. He highlighted that Bengaluru and Mumbai are major economic centres with strong daily passenger demand. He said the new corridor via Davangere and Hubballi would reduce travel time and boost regional development. He also welcomed the new Bengaluru–Mumbai express train and said it will help passengers during peak travel seasons.

He noted that earlier only one direct train, the Udyan Express, served the route for many years. According to him, the new services will ease congestion and improve connectivity between the two cities. He further said that railway investments in Karnataka have increased significantly, with large projects underway across the state. He added that electrification and station redevelopment are progressing under national railway modernisation plans. He said these developments will strengthen Karnataka's transport network and support long-term economic growth.

He thanked the Prime Minister and railway officials for their efforts to improve infrastructure in the region. He said Karnataka is receiving higher railway funding compared to earlier years, which is helping speed up projects. Work on multiple rail lines, station upgrades, and electrification is continuing, with officials aiming for faster completion to improve passenger convenience across the state. The proposal is expected to be reviewed by the Centre for further consideration.

DEVELOPMENT-DEADLINE-PUSH

Officials assure completion of Rabakavi Mahishwadgi bridge

RABAKAVI BANAHATTI

Officials of the Road Development Corporation have assured that the long-pending work on the Rabakavi–Mahishwadgi bridge will be completed within the scheduled time after protests over delays in the project.

The issue gained attention after local leaders and residents raised concerns about the slow progress of construction and alleged negligence by the authorities. A group led by Terdal constituency leader Siddu Konnur and senior leader Ramanna Hulakunda met the Managing Director of the corporation in Bengaluru to discuss the matter.

During the meeting, officials said that strict instructions have already been issued to the contractor due to delays in the project. They warned that penalties would be imposed if the work is not completed within the deadline.

The Managing Director also assured that efforts would be made to complete the remaining structural work, including the construction of two to three pillars in the river section, within one month. A special team of senior engineers will be deployed to monitor the progress and ensure timely completion.

Local representatives informed officials that people in the region are facing severe inconvenience due to the incomplete bridge. They also mentioned that a call for a total shutdown had been planned on May 19, 2026, if progress was not seen.

Following discussions, officials requested protesters to temporarily withdraw their strike call, assuring them of faster action and close monitoring of the project.

Community leaders including Ramanna Hulakunda, Bhimashi Patil, and others stressed the urgency of completing the bridge, saying it is essential for daily travel, transport of goods, and connectivity between villages.

Authorities have now promised continuous supervision and warned the contractor of strict action if delays continue, aiming to bring the project back on track soon.

QUICK READ

BJP attacks Cong over Kerala leadership choice

NEW DELHI

BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla accused the Congress of selecting V.D. Satheesan as Kerala Chief Minister under pressure from the Indian Union Muslim League. He claimed the party ignored the choice of its own legislators and acted according to outside influence. Poonawalla also criticised Congress over its reaction to the Bhojshala court verdict, alleging the party was against Hindu interests. He further targeted Congress leader Digvijaya Singh for comments about communal politics. In a separate attack, the BJP leader accused Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee of disrespecting the judiciary and provoking opinion through political statements.

Delhi police arrest couple in rickshaw theft case

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police arrested a couple accused of robbing passengers travelling in e-rickshaws in the Moti Nagar area. The case came to light after a 60-year-old man reported that Rs 1 lakh was stolen from his bag during a ride. Police examined CCTV footage and identified the e-rickshaw used in the crime. After technical surveillance, officers arrested Suresh, 25, and his wife Rajni alias Anjali, 22. During questioning, the couple admitted targeting elderly passengers and stealing valuables when they got down from the vehicle. Police recovered Rs 90,000 and the e-rickshaw. Further investigation into similar cases is underway.

Shah calls for smarter urban development plans

AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said poor town planning has slowed the growth of many Indian cities and stressed the need for better urban development policies. Speaking at the inauguration of the Ganesh Real Estate Management Institute in Ahmedabad, Shah said cities often expand without long-term planning, forcing authorities to add facilities only after people settle. He noted that the real estate sector mainly focused on housing needs instead of environmental balance and civic planning.
The new institute will provide education and research in modern city development. A larger campus near Khodiyar Lake is also planned to support sustainable and technology-driven urban growth.

Amit Shah declares open first IT SEZ Park

'The country is now leading the charge in cutting-edge industries like artificial intelligence, robotics, semiconductors, and quantum computing'

AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that India is successfully positioning itself as a "founder nation" in rapidly emerging global sectors.

Shah emphasized that the country is now leading the charge in cutting-edge industries like artificial intelligence, robotics, semiconductors, and quantum computing.

The Home Minister shared these remarks during the grand opening of Million Minds Tech City, which marks Gujarat's very first specialized IT economic zone.

Speaking at the launch of the project's initial phase in Tragad, Shah explained that India has officially transitioned from lagging behind in technology to establishing a powerful global presence. He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's forward-thinking leadership for this massive economic shift.

According to Shah, advanced fields such as cybersecurity, space technology, and autonomous systems will define the global economy over the next 25 years. He noted that while Indian youth already possess incredible natural intelligence, they simply require the physical space, supportive atmosphere, and modern infrastructure to thrive. Tech parks like this new development aim to provide exactly that essential ecosystem.

The first phase of the ambitious project cost around 1,100 crore rupees to build, offering 13.5 lakh square feet of premium workspace for 9,000 highly skilled professionals. Once all seven phases are completed over the next five years, the massive tech park is expected to attract 15,000 crore rupees in total investments and create over 63,000 high-value jobs, transforming Gujarat into a global technology hub.

HM pushes Ahmedabad as tech destination

AHMEDABAD: Shah said Gujarat should strengthen its position in India's service sector and make Ahmedabad a leading technology hub. Speaking at the launch of Million Minds Tech City, Gujarat's first SEZ IT park, Shah said the city should compete with Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, and Gurugram. He praised Gujarat's growth in manufacturing, ports, green energy, and infrastructure under PM Narendra Modi's leadership as chief minister. Shah said the new project would create thousands of skilled jobs and attract major investments. The seven-phase development is expected to generate over 63,000 employment opportunities within five years.

DMRC deploys 6 additional metro trains

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has announced a major initiative to boost public transport use and curb private vehicle dependence. The corporation will introduce 24 additional train trips every single Monday by deploying six extra trains across its extensive network.

Officials stated that extra services could expand to other weekdays if commuter demand rises. This strategic shift highlights a growing commitment to green urban mobility, energy security, and environmental sustainability. By providing a highly efficient alternative to petroleum-reliant road transport, the DMRC expects a substantial rise in daily passenger footfall. To manage the anticipated surge, authorities are actively reinforcing station safety and infrastructure. Planned improvements include deploying extra security guards, opening temporary ticket windows, and activating standby baggage scanners to significantly reduce commuter waiting times during intense peak hours. The DMRC continues to serve as an essential lifeline for the National Capital Region, offering seamless connections to major airports, railway stations, bus terminals, and regional rapid transit networks. To ensure comfortable journeys from start to finish, the corporation runs a robust last-mile ecosystem via electric rickshaws, bike taxis, and feeder buses.

Kamal meets CM to secure Tamil cinema

He submitted a six-point memorandum to TN CM Vijay, proposing a state-owned OTT platform and key tax reforms to revive Tamil cinema

CHENNAI

Actor-politician Kamal Haasan has submitted a vital six-point memorandum to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay. The Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) chief is seeking major government interventions aimed at revitalizing the Tamil film industry and protecting its workers.Taking to media after a meeting with the Chief Minister, Haasan detailed his recommendations to secure the future of Tamil cinema. A major proposal includes launching a state-owned OTT platform. This government-backed streaming service would offer audiences affordable, subsidized access

to mainstream Tamil movies, independent films, and cultural documentaries.To relieve financial pressure on filmmakers and theater owners, Haasan called for the total abolition of the current four percent local body entertainment tax. He argued that rising production and operational expenses are heavily crippling the local entertainment sector.The movie star turned politician also demanded a fierce crackdown on digital piracy. He urged the state to create a dedicated anti-piracy police unit capable of taking down illegal content in real-time. To boost cinema revenues, he requested that theaters be legally allowed to screen five shows daily for all films. Furthermore, he proposed a mandatory eight-week theatrical window before any movie hits digital platforms to safeguard distributor profits. Finally, Haasan recommended a new film production incentive scheme. This initiative aims to restore Tamil Nadu as India's premier filmmaking hub, creating thousands of local jobs and boosting regional tourism.

ADANI GROUP INTRODUCES EXPERT EYE TRAINING CENTER

BIHAR

Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani announced a major healthcare initiative to provide accessible and affordable eye treatment in Bihar.

The project, named 'ACE - Adani Centre for Eye Diseases', is a collaborative effort between the Adani Foundation and the renowned Akhand Jyoti Hospital.

During his visit to Mastichak, the industrialist performed a 'Bhoomi Pujan' for the advanced medical facility. To support these service-oriented healthcare goals, Adani committed more than 700 crore rupees over the coming years. He explained that restoring someone's eyesight is far more than a routine medical treatment, it is a profound act that brings hope, self-confidence, and dignity back into their life. Alongside the main hospital, the project will introduce "ATOM - Adani Training Centre for Ophthalmic Medicine." This specialized institution will focus on preparing a new generation of eye specialists and training local women healthcare workers. The overarching goal is to eventually expand these high-quality eye care services across the entire country.

Praising the social service efforts of Akhand Jyoti and the Gayatri Parivar, Adani stated that compassion must be transformed into direct action. Dr. Priti G. Adani, Chairperson of the Adani Foundation, also accompanied him and expressed deep respect for the region's selfless dedication to humanitarian work. She noted that witnessing this level of care offers renewed inspiration to eradicate preventable blindness. Ultimately, the mega-campaign seeks to bring "new light" to rural and underserved communities through structured values, sustained funding, and true community commitment.

The CBI expanded its NEET paper leak probe to Maharashtra's Nanded, raiding a family whose daughter's score skyrocketed.

SUSPICIOUS NEET SCORE JUMP TRIGGERS CBI SEARCH

NANDED

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has expanded its nationwide NEET paper leak probe into Maharashtra's Nanded district. Teams launched surprise, marathon raids and intense interrogations to dismantle the network behind the massive examination scam.Investigators spent over eight hours searching the home of the Kadam family in Vidyutnagar. Officials suspect the family paid five lakh rupees to secure a leaked question paper for their daughter. Suspicions arose after the student, who previously averaged only 100 to 120 marks on practice tests, saw her actual NEET score miraculously skyrocket to an impressive 560 marks. This sudden jump tipped off investigators tracing the racket.The federal agency moved on Nanded immediately after questioning a coaching institute driver in nearby Latur. In another major breakthrough, a separate CBI team raided an office and residence linked to another accused individual, Shubham Khairnar. Family members were thoroughly questioned regarding their alleged financial links to the paper leak syndicate. Officials strongly suspect this family also paid a substantial bribe for the exam questions.The fresh raids are part of an intensified, nationwide crackdown by the CBI. The agency is carefully tracking illegal financial transactions, coaching institute ties, and middle-men who allegedly circulated exam questions to wealthy candidates before the test. The unfolding scandal has sparked massive national controversy, and investigators are working around the clock across multiple states to bring all guilty parties to justice.

Kolkata police seize illegal firearms, ammunition

KOLKATA

The Kolkata Police have arrested a 28-year-old man after discovering illegal firearms and live ammunition in his possession. The successful operation took place in the Banshdroni area, located on the southern outskirts of the state capital, following a tip-off.Law enforcement officials identified the arrested individual as Satyabrata Basu Roy, a resident of Niranjan Pally. Acting on specific, verified intelligence, a specialized police team intercepted the suspect within the jurisdiction of the Banshdroni Police Station. During a thorough search, officers recovered two improvised, country-made semi-automatic firearms along with four live cartridges from his exclusive possession.The police confirmed that a criminal case has been officially registered against the youth under the strict provisions of the Arms Act. Investigators are currently conducting a detailed follow-up inquiry to trace the original source of the weapons and determine if the suspect is linked to larger criminal networks.This arrest comes amid an intensified, statewide crackdown on illegal activities and anti-social elements across West Bengal. Local law enforcement agencies have significantly stepped up their vigilance and enforcement drives to maintain public order.

Bihar leaders praise PM Modi's global investment focus

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign visits are strictly designed to strengthen India's global standing and accelerate the country's transformation into a fully developed nation.

Bihar BJP State President Sanjay Saraogi strongly backed the diplomatic efforts, stating that the international tours directly serve vital national interests.

Saraogi noted that the Prime Minister's recent visit to the UAE focused heavily on securing critical infrastructure investments and

addressing the ongoing global energy crisis. He compared the national strategy to local efforts, explaining that just as the Bihar government invites domestic companies to set up regional operations, the Prime Minister is actively inviting foreign nations to invest in India.

Echoing these thoughts, Bihar Minister Ram Kripal Yadav emphasized that these overseas visits successfully build relations with friendly countries. He stated that the resulting welfare agreements are key to driving the nation's growth, progress, and overall economic development.

The Prime Minister is currently undertaking a comprehensive five-nation diplomatic tour that covers the UAE, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Italy. The tour explicitly aims to expand clean energy cooperation and boost trade partnerships. India and the UAE have already signed landmark agreements, including a major five billion dollar infrastructure investment.

During bilateral talks in Abu Dhabi, Prime Minister Modi reassured leaders that India stands firmly alongside the UAE to restore regional peace and stability. He additionally highlighted the strategic importance of keeping global maritime trade channels safe and open, ensuring international laws are respected.

FIRE SCARE

Probe ordered after Rajdhani Express catch fire

KOTA

A high-level inquiry has been ordered after a fire broke out inside two rear coaches of the Delhi-bound Rajdhani Express. Railway officials confirmed that all passengers were evacuated safely, and no injuries or casualties were reported.

The incident occurred around 5:15 a.m. near Nagda within the Kota Division, affecting a guard cabin and an AC 3-tier coach of the Trivandrum-New Delhi Rajdhani.

West Central Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Harshit Srivastava stated that the coach's built-in safety systems functioned perfectly, automatically halting the train the moment the fire was detected.

The alert train crew immediately detached the burning rear coaches from the rest of the train to prevent the flames from spreading. To ensure safety during firefighting operations, the overhead electrical power supply was temporarily shut down. Railway officers rushed to the site, providing refreshments to the stranded passengers while emergency teams worked to clear the tracks.

The train later resumed its journey, with an additional coach scheduled to be attached at Kota station to accommodate the displaced travelers. While the exact cause of the fire remains under investigation, the railway administration has released emergency helpline numbers for concerned relatives.

The incident caused significant disruptions on the busy New Delhi-Mumbai rail route, forcing several major trains to halt at nearby stations for hours. In response to the scare, railway authorities have launched a comprehensive nationwide safety audit of fire-protection systems across all passenger coaches.

Rahul demands Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation

NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, has strongly reiterated his demand for the immediate resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. Gandhi accused the BJP-led central government of failing to take real accountability for the repeated paper leaks that continue to threaten students' futures. Taking to media, the Congress leader highlighted a pattern of systemic failures by comparing the recent NEET-UG 2026 cancellation to the massive exam controversies of 2024. He pointed out that while a Central Bureau of Investigation probe was launched and a committee formed during the 2024 crisis, the education minister still refused to step down. History is now repeating itself with the 2026 leak, as the government sets up another investigation while Pradhan remains comfortably in power.

QUICK READ

Minister's son surrenders in Telangana POCSO probe

HYDERABAD

Bandi Bhagirath, son of Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar, surrendered to the Cyberabad Police Special Operations Team in connection with an alleged POCSO case. Advocate Karuna Sagar said the surrender was made following the minister's instructions after anticipatory bail proceedings were delayed in the High Court. Police confirmed that statements from the minor girl and her parents were recorded before a magistrate. The case includes charges of sexual harassment under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the POCSO Act. Bhagirath has denied the allegations, claiming the case was filed after he complained about an alleged Rs 5 crore extortion attempt against him.

Madani warns against growing communal political pressure

NEW DELHI

Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind chief Maulana Arshad Madani urged citizens and political groups to unite against communal forces, alleging that Muslims were being targeted through intimidation and hate-based politics. After a two-day meeting, the organisation claimed constitutional values and religious freedom were under threat. Madani criticised recent political statements in West Bengal and opposed measures like the Uniform Civil Code and mandatory singing of Vande Mataram in schools. He said governments should work with fairness instead of fear. The organisation also called for peaceful democratic efforts to restore harmony, brotherhood.

Odisha celebrates culture at Nimapara Patha Utsav

PURI

Odisha Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida inaugurated the Nimapara Patha Utsav 2026 in Puri and praised the region's rich cultural traditions. The event featured public awareness performances through street plays, solo acting, Pala, and Dasakathia by students and local artists. Traditional folk arts, including tribal dances, horse dances, and Sankirtan, were also showcased. During the programme, officials unveiled the jersey, medal, cap, and mascot "Utkarsha Ghoda" for the Utkarsha Nimapara 2.0 initiative. Parida announced upcoming marathons, sports, music, and dance competitions, along with university-level debates. She urged local youth to actively participate in development activities.

Unusual seaweed surge alarms coastal workers

Massive seaweed washing ashore in Thoothukudi sparked climate concerns, coinciding with ZSI scientists discovering 10,000-year-old Holocene marine fossils seven kilometers inland at Panaiyur village.

THOOTHUKUDI

Massive quantities of seaweed washed ashore along the Thoothukudi coast, sparking deep concern among local fishing communities.

Experienced fishermen are linking the unusual phenomenon directly to climate change, rising sea temperatures, and rapidly shifting ocean currents.

While local fishers noted that seaweed movement is somewhat common during specific full moon and new moon phases, the sheer volume of this weekend's event points to a deeper disturbance in the marine ecosystem. Shifting wave patterns and noticeable changes in the underwater environment have left coastal workers worried about the immediate future of their seasonal catches.

The environmental scare coincides with another fascinating discovery in the Thoothukudi district, where scientists recently uncovered thousands-of-years-old marine fossils in nearby Panaiyur village. Initially spotted by a local enthusiast in late 2025, the site was thoroughly investigated by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) earlier this year.Teams collected 104 distinct fossil specimens, primarily consisting of ancient marine bivalves and gastropods. Experts determined that these specimens belong to the Holocene epoch, dating back roughly 8,000 to 12,000 years.

Interestingly, the fossil site sits nearly seven kilometers inland from the modern shoreline, proving that the region was entirely submerged during prehistoric sea-level rises. Heavy regional rainfall in 2023 washed away topsoil and sand, accidentally exposing these hidden sedimentary layers, sandstones, and ancient water channels.

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav acknowledged the scientific importance of the area, while local geologists have urged the government to officially protect the site to allow for advanced radiocarbon dating.

Chemists oppose central online pharmacy rules

A high-level delegation from the Telangana Chamber of Chemists and Druggists met with All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) President Asaduddin Owaisi, successfully securing his official backing for their upcoming protests.

The pharmacy association presented a list of crucial demands to the Hyderabad MP, chief among them being immediate government action against illegal e-pharmacy operators.

The delegation argued that unregulated online pharmacies pose a major threat to public health and create unfair competition for traditional, brick-and-mortar drugstores.

Additionally, the chemists requested Owaisi's political support in demanding the withdrawal of two specific central government notifications Owaisi listened to the group's concerns and assured the delegation that AIMIM stands firmly behind the traditional pharmacy sector. He promised to formally raise these structural issues on the floor of the House during Parliament's upcoming Monsoon Session.Furthermore, the AIMIM chief extended his party's full solidarity to the one-day nationwide bandh (shutdown) called by the association, which is officially scheduled to take place on May 20, 2026.

- **Notification GSR 817(E)** (issued August 2018), which laid out initial draft rules for regulating online pharmacies.
- **Notification G.S.R. 220(E)** (issued March 2020), which was introduced during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic to permit the doorstep delivery of prescription medicines.

The YSRCP announced statewide protests against skyrocketing fuel prices, accusing the Chandrababu Naidu gov't of abandoning election promises.

YSRCP launches statewide protests over fuel hike

TADEPALLI

The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) has announced major statewide protests on to fight skyrocketing petrol and diesel prices in Andhra Pradesh.

Party leaders accused Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's coalition government of completely abandoning its election promises to lower fuel costs.

YSRCP State Coordinator Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy detailed the extensive agitation plan during a party-wide teleconference. He emphasized that local citizens are already struggling under immense financial pressure. Instead of providing economic relief, the ruling government has managed to push Andhra Pradesh's fuel rates to some of the highest levels in the entire country.

Sajjala warned that this steep price hike is triggering a dangerous rise in the cost of essential daily goods. This trend is causing severe distress to farmers, transport operators, and middle-class families. He reminded voters that Naidu and his allies strongly promised strict fuel price controls before winning power, demanding they now honor those vows.

Following direct orders from YSRCP President YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the opposition party will hold massive demonstrations at every single constituency headquarters across the state.

Junior pharmacist kicked out over medicine scam

GANDHINAGAR

A government pharmacist in Gujarat has been punished after he allegedly turned away sick patients demanding medicine, even though the clinic's shelves were completely full.

The trouble started at a medical center in Visnagar. Visitors complained that they were being denied basic healthcare supplies. When Health Minister Praful Pansheriya heard about the issue, he ordered an immediate investigation. Inspectors discovered that a massive stockpile of medicine was sitting unused in Gandhinagar, proving the shortage was completely artificial.

Following the shocking discovery, the authorities cracked down hard on the worker responsible.

NCB captures international India-Myanmar drug cartel

GUWAHATI

In a major breakthrough against transnational narcotics trafficking, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has arrested a notorious Myanmar-based kingpin in New Delhi. The smuggler, identified as Thancintuang (alias Chintuang or Tluanga), was captured following extensive surveillance and coordinated interstate operations.

Chintuang was the main international supplier of high-grade methamphetamine and heroin across a massive smuggling corridor spanning Myanmar, Mizoram, Manipur, Assam, Tripura, and Bangladesh. Investigators estimate that his network's illicit drug operations are valued at approximately 115 crore rupees. He was a wanted fugitive in multiple cases, acting as the prime supplier for major seizures, including a 49.1-kilogram shipment of meth tablets intercepted in Agartala. The NCB has launched a comprehensive, 360-degree financial investigation using strict anti-money laundering laws to permanently freeze the syndicate's bank accounts and seize their assets.

This arrest marks the second major Myanmar-based drug supplier caught by the bureau this year. Adopting a rigorous "top-to-bottom" approach to dismantle entire networks rather than just seizing individual shipments, the NCB's North Eastern Region has shown incredible results. Over the last two years, their aggressive border enforcement has led to the registration of dozens of drug cases, over 170 arrests, and the seizure of illicit narcotics worth over 665 crore rupees, significantly safeguarding national security and public health.

- **Vungkhanthawna:** A close associate and primary facilitator who managed the logistics, transit, and delivery routes of the incoming drug shipments.
- **Lalrampari:** A top hawala operator arrested by the bureau for laundering nearly 100 crore rupees in illicit drug money. Her financial network details have been handed over to the Enforcement Directorate (ED), and her properties have been frozen.
- **Abu Saleh (alias Saifuddin) & Jabrul:** Indian logistics coordinators arrested in Assam who personally managed the distribution and physical transport of narcotics across the highly sensitive border states.

Vaishnaw launches new Bengaluru-Mumbai express

NEW DELHI

Travel between Karnataka and Maharashtra just got a lot smoother. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw virtually launched a brand-new express train connecting Bengaluru and Mumbai, answering a long-standing demand from commuters in both northern and southern parts of Karnataka.

During the launch event, Vaishnaw shared even bigger news for frequent travelers, announcing that a high-speed Vande Bharat Sleeper train service will soon start operating on the exact same busy route. This major expansion comes on the heels of massive infrastructure growth in Karnataka. The government has poured heavy funding into the state, building about 1,750 kilometers of fresh railway lines since 2014.

The railway network is currently undergoing a massive face-lift. Under a specialized national scheme, 61 stations across Karnataka are getting fully redeveloped, with major upgrades already completed at nine locations.

The busy Bengaluru Cantonment and Yeshwantpur stations are also being completely rebuilt with modern amenities.

Meanwhile, work on the highly anticipated Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project is moving ahead smoothly across all four travel corridors.

Teams are busy conducting surveys and securing land to seamlessly link key city hubs like Electronic City, Marathahalli, Hebbal, and the international airport.

State Minister V Somanna expressed deep gratitude for the new train line, noting that Karnataka now runs 12 pairs of premium Vande Bharat trains.

The state is also tracking close to 100 percent network electrification, ensuring cleaner, faster, and much safer journeys for millions of regular passengers.

Loudspeaker row sparks anger over new rules

KOLKATA

A major row has erupted in West Bengal after police allegedly ordered religious places to take down their loudspeakers. The head priest of Kolkata's famous Nakhoda Masjid, Maulana Mohammad Shafiq Qasmi, hit back, stating that neither the Supreme Court nor pollution boards have ever ordered a total ban on microphones.

The clash started after Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari told police to crack down on loud volumes and stop religious events from blocking roads.

However, Qasmi argued that the law only sets sound limits for different areas like 65 to 70 decibels for neighborhoods rather than a full ban. He claimed police are overstepping their boundaries and demanded they follow actual legal guidelines.

Uttarakhand CM greenlights new bridge project

UDHAM SINGH NAGAR

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami launched a major infrastructure project by laying the foundation stone for a new bridge over the Sisauna River in Sitarganj.

The 150-meter-long concrete structure will cost around Rs 11.41 crore and will connect Shaktifarm directly with the local SIDCUL industrial zone.

This new project is expected to bring a massive sigh of relief to nearly 50,000 local residents.

Once completed, the bridge will slash travel distances to the industrial hub and the nearby block office by about nine kilometers. Chief Minister Dhami highlighted that the bridge will make daily commutes smoother while injecting new life into the economic and social growth of the entire region.

ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಸ್ತೆ ಸಾರಿಗೆ ನಿಗಮ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ ವಿಭಾಗ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕಕರಸಾ/ವಿವಿ/ಸಂಚಾರ/ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ/187/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ:15.05.2026

ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 12/2026
(ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ವಿಜಯಪುರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ತನಿಖಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಖಾಸಗಿ ವಾಹನ (ಕಾರು) ಗಳನ್ನು ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ವಿವರ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ.

1) ಮುಚ್ಚಿದ ಲಕೋಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್/ಕೋಟೆಶನ್ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.05.2026** ರ **17.00 ಗಂಟೆಯ ವರೆಗೆ.**

2) ಟೆಂಡರ್/ಕೋಟೆಶನ್ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27.05.2026** ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 10.00 **ಗಂಟೆಯ ನಂತರ.**

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯ ಪ್ರತಿಯನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ರವರ ಹೊಸ ತಂತ್ರಾಂಶ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ದಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ ಅಥವಾ DTO ರವರ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:7760992252 ಗೆ ಕರೆಮಾಡಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ ಅಥವಾ ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ವಿಷಯ ನಿರ್ವಾಹಕರನ್ನು ಕಚೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದು ವಿಚಾರಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಕ.ಕ.ರ.ಸಾ ನಿಗಮ ವಿಜಯಪುರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ವಿಭಾಗೀಯ ಕಚೇರಿ (ಸಂಚಾರ ಶಾಖೆ) ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದು ವಿಚಾರಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ವಿಭಾಗೀಯ ನಿಯಂತ್ರಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ಕ.ಕ.ರ.ಸಾ ನಿಗಮ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ ವಿಭಾಗ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/102/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

NICOBAR ECOLOGICAL SCARE

Great Nicobar project faces fierce ecological protests

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh has written a letter to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, demanding a complete halt to the massive Great Nicobar Island mega-project.

The politician warned that the multi-billion-dollar infrastructure plan is a direct "recipe for ecological disaster" and urged the central government to consider safer, alternative defense upgrades.

Ramesh fiercely criticized the center for using national security as a shield to push through an essentially commercial venture. He highlighted that the project which includes a massive shipping port, a brand-new township, and an international airport, faces intense public backlash over severe environmental threats. The Rajya Sabha MP stated that he had already flagged the issue with the Environment and Tribal Affairs ministries over violations of tribal community rights.

While agreeing that India needs to strengthen its military defenses, Ramesh argued that the current mega-project does not actually help military readiness. Instead, he presented a list of low-impact alternatives suggested by top naval officers.

He pointed out that existing strategic assets like INS Baaz have been waiting for runway expansions for nearly five years.

Clearing those pending upgrades would secure the region with minimal environmental damage.The government maintains that the project leverages a key global shipping route and aligns with strict policies protecting local tribal groups.

However, opposition leaders remain unconvinced. Ramesh urged the Defence Minister to review more sustainable paths, warning that destroying the island's unique ecosystem.

QUICK READ

Kami Rita sets new Everest record with 32nd climb

KATHMANDU

Nepal's legendary mountaineer Kami Rita Sherpa has broken his own record by successfully climbing Mount Everest for the 32nd time. The 55-year-old reached the 8,848.86-metre summit at 10:12 a.m. during the Spring 2026 climbing season, according to Nepal's Department of Tourism. He achieved the feat while leading an expedition organised by 14 Peaks Expedition. Known as the "Everest Man," Kami Rita first summited the world's highest peak in 1994 and has since become one of its most experienced guides. His achievement continues to inspire the global climbing community and highlights Nepal's strong mountaineering legacy and expertise in high-altitude expeditions.

HRCP flags rising violence in Pakistan provinces

ISLAMABAD

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has expressed serious concern over worsening violence in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, saying citizens are increasingly unsafe due to abductions, targeted killings, and militant attacks. In a statement, the commission criticised the state for failing to protect people on highways and in public areas. It cited the reported kidnapping of senior University of Gwadar officials in Mastung and the killing of a professor in Noshki. HRCP also highlighted recent bombings and attacks in several Khyber Pakhtunkhwa districts. The body urged authorities to ensure swift action, recover missing persons, and improve public security.

Trump post sparks Iran war fears amid US military review

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has raised fresh global tensions after posting an AI-generated image with the message "It Was The Calm Before The Storm." The post comes amid rising friction involving Iran and growing concerns over the Strait of Hormuz. Reports suggest the White House is reviewing possible military options, including strikes and special operations plans, while diplomatic efforts continue to prevent escalation. The situation has reportedly led to high-level discussions within the US administration. Iran has warned it is ready to respond to any aggression, as global powers call for restraint and de-escalation.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SYED DADAPEER ISHAQ** , S/o, Syed Ishaq, Resident of Azad Nagar H K G N Manzil Hiriyur Town Chitradurga Dist 577598, have changed my name to **SYED DADA PEER** , vide affidavit dated: 17.05.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VIKRANT GOWDA.K.J, S/o Jayarame Gowda, R/at No. 29, Rashtrakoota Layout, Manganahalli, Ramsandra, Bangalore-560 060, hereby declare that have changed my name from MAHADEVA.K.J to VIKRANT GOWDA.K.J. Vide affidavit dated: 28/07/2023 sworn before Notary S.R. Ravikumar, Bengaluru.

Climate change risks quadrupling Australian homelessness

'Aus faces a fourfold rise in homelessness over next decade due to climate-driven housing crises'

CANBERRA

Australia could face a devastating fourfold increase in homelessness over the next ten years due to climate change pressures.

A groundbreaking study warned that global warming will trigger a massive housing affordability crisis unless local governments immediately change how they design public policies.

The research reveals that climate-driven economic shocks such as spiking home insurance premiums, broken building supply chains, and erratic real estate investments, will heavily strain the housing market.

If global greenhouse gas emissions remain high, buying a home could become twice as expensive, while rental prices across the country could shoot up by 45 percent. Even under a best-case, low-emissions future, the data shows homelessness would still double and rental options would shrink by 23 percent.

Using twenty years of public data, researchers simulated how future climate disasters would impact everyday citizens. They discovered that broad housing plans focused blindly on fixing mortgage interest rates or insurance costs often backfire. These poorly calculated programs inadvertently push severe financial burdens onto lower-income tenants, widening the wealth gap.

It has been stated in reports that climate change is completely ignored in modern housing

debates and lawmakers should run digital climate simulations before passing any new regulations to guarantee vulnerable groups are protected. Experts emphasized that the time is now for local councils to build resilient, targeted safety nets so no one is left stranded by future environmental shocks.

Venezuela deports key Maduro ally to US

CARACAS

The government of Venezuela has officially deported prominent businessman and former minister Alex Saab to the United States to face multiple criminal charges.

In a public statement, the Venezuelan Migration Authority confirmed that the deportation of the Colombian-born insider was executed in accordance with local immigration laws due to his widely documented legal infractions.

Saab's sudden removal marks a significant political shift by Venezuela's new acting president, Delcy Rodriguez, who took power after former leader Nicolas Maduro was captured by American forces earlier this year. Shortly after taking office, Rodriguez dismissed Saab from his cabinet post as industry minister, stripping him of his vast influence over foreign investments. Saab was subsequently detained by local authorities following an official request from Washington. United States prosecutors have long accused Saab of acting as Maduro's financial fixer, alleging he amassed a massive fortune by diverting millions of dollars from government food and housing contracts through dummy corporations.

Drone strike hits UAE nuclear plant perimeter

ABU DHABI

A hostile drone strike targeted the United Arab Emirates' al-Dhafra desert region, sparking a fire inside the outer compound of the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant. The sudden aerial assault triggered immediate emergency response protocols to contain the blaze, which broke out at an external electrical generator located outside the facility's inner perimeter.

Local officials quickly reassured the public that emergency teams successfully managed the situation on the ground. According to an official statement, no injuries were reported, and the incident had absolutely no impact on local radiological safety levels. The United Nations' atomic watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, expressed grave concern over the security breach, reiterating that military actions threatening nuclear safety are entirely unacceptable. The unprecedented strike marks a sharp escalation in regional tensions, representing the first time the four-reactor facility has been actively targeted during the ongoing Iran war. The $20 billion desert complex, built in collaboration with South Korea, remains the only operational nuclear power station on the Arabian Peninsula.While no group has claimed responsibility, suspicion has fallen on Iran due to recent geopolitical friction. The strike severely threatens

A hostile drone strike targeted a generator outside the UAE's Barakah Nuclear Plant, sparking a fire but causing no injuries or impact on radiological safety.

a fragile regional ceasefire, which has already been strained by a breakdown in diplomatic talks between Iran and the United States. Global experts warn that any collapse of the current truce could plunge the Middle East back into open warfare, further worsening a global energy crisis already aggravated by active military blockades surrounding the vital Strait of Hormuz.

PM seeks Dutch tech for water management infra

THE HAGUE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi toured the famous Afsluitdijk water management structure alongside his Dutch counterpart, Rob Jetten.

The landmark visit highlights a growing partnership focused on bringing world-class flood control, climate resilience, and sustainable infrastructure technology to India.

The Afsluitdijk is a massive 32-kilometer-long dam that blocks the North Sea, creating a vital freshwater lake while protecting large parts of the Netherlands from severe flooding. Modi heavily praised the groundbreaking engineering, stating that the entire international community can learn a great deal from the pioneering work done by the Dutch. He emphasized that India hopes to adopt this modern technology to upgrade its own irrigation systems, flood defenses, and inland waterways.

The high-profile visit also spotlighted a strong connection between the Dutch dam and India's planned Kalpasar project in Gujarat. The ambitious Kalpasar initiative plans to build a freshwater reservoir across the Gulf of Khambhat to generate tidal power and boost regional agriculture. To cement this technical bond, the two nations signed a formal Letter of Intent to collaborate closely on hydraulic engineering and large-scale project execution.

Concluding his successful two-day visit to The Hague, Modi announced that bilateral relations have now officially advanced to a "Strategic Partnership.

US launches massive F-35 stealth retrofit

WASHINGTON

The United States has rolled out a massive $991.1 million electronic warfare upgrade program for its elite fleet of F-35 Lightning II stealth fighters.

Aerospace giant Lockheed Martin was awarded the hefty contract to produce and deliver 432 advanced modification kits, benefiting both the American military and multiple allied foreign operators.

The critical upgrade is tied directly to the F-35's highly anticipated Block 4 modernization package, which represents the most significant evolution of the jet's capabilities to date.

The retrofits will deliver over 70 major upgrades across all three aircraft variants, focusing heavily on increased missile capacity, advanced enemy target recognition, and boosted electronic warfare systems. The modern kits will optimize the fighter's

existing BAE Systems radar technology, providing pilots with 360-degree protection to suppress hostile air defenses in heavily contested combat zones.

The sudden push for high-tech electronic warfare upgrades comes amid rising military tensions in the Middle East. Recent reports indicate that F-35 jets flying near the strategic Strait of Hormuz have frequently been forced to broadcast emergency transponder codes due to sudden in-flight issues.

Furthermore, Iranian state media recently claimed that their advanced air-defense systems successfully shot down an American F-35 over central Iran.

While US defense officials flatly denied those shootdown claims, they did confirm that an F-35 had to perform an emergency landing following an intense Iranian missile barrage.

This vital upgrade project is scheduled to run until March 2032 to ensure allied air fleets maintain absolute dominance.

India-Netherlands elevate diplomatic ties

THE HAGUE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has concluded his high-profile visit to the Netherlands, marking a historic breakthrough as both nations officially elevated their bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership.

The transition sets a transformative template for the future, backed by a shared roadmap targeting next-generation industries, climate resilience, and maritime security.

During his visit, Modi toured the iconic 32-kilometer-long Afsluitdijk dam alongside Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten. The Prime Minister praised the structure's pioneering flood control and freshwater storage capabilities, noting its direct relevance to Gujarat's ambitious Kalpasar Project.

Pak railways finances hit by worker protests

ISLAMABAD

Major claims of a historic financial recovery by Pakistan Railways have come under intense fire after revelations that the state department owes more than 21 billion rupees in unpaid salaries and retirement dues to its workforce.

The rising internal scandal has triggered a bitter administrative dispute between the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Finance over who is responsible for releasing the trapped funds.

Desperate railway officials recently submitted official ledgers to the National Assembly, pointing the finger at finance regulators for stalling critical payments.

According to the leaked documents, thousands of employees who retired after March 2023 have not received a single rupee of their post-retirement benefits. This includes roughly 10 billion rupees in outstanding gratuity packages and 7.52 billion rupees meant for grieving families under the Prime Minister's Assistance Package.

The severe delays have caused widespread panic among aging pensioners and low-income laborers who rely heavily on monthly payouts. Other essential safety-net welfare programs are also frozen, with over one billion rupees in family marriage grants and 1.52 billion rupees in basic benevolent funds completely withheld.

While the government recently celebrated generating a record 93 billion rupees in annual revenue, critics point out that the network remains financially unstable, relying on a massive 64 billion rupees in emergency government bailouts to stay afloat.

Putin to visit China for strategic talks

MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin will travel to China for a two-day state visit starting May 19, following an official invitation from Chinese President Xi Jinping. The high-profile trip is strategically timed to mark the 25th anniversary of the historic treaty of friendship and cooperation signed between the two powerful nations.During their meetings in Beijing, Putin and Xi are scheduled to discuss ways to deepen their comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation. The two leaders will also exchange views on pressing international and regional matters. Following their discussions, they are expected to sign a major high-level Joint Statement along with several bilateral agreements. Additionally, Putin will hold talks with Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

India reclaims historic 11th-century Chola copper plates

THE HAGUE

In a monumental cultural and diplomatic triumph, India has successfully secured the repatriation of the priceless 11th-century Chola Copper Plates from the Netherlands.

The invaluable artifacts were officially handed back to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the presence of Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten during a high-profile ceremony.

Hailing the breakthrough, PM Modi called it a "joyous moment for every Indian" and praised the Cholas for their unparalleled culture, governance, and maritime prowess.

Indian diaspora gives PM Modi rousing welcome

GOTHENBURG

A wave of immense joy swept through Gothenburg as hundreds of excited Indian expats gathered to give Prime Minister Narendra Modi a grand welcome to Sweden.

The massive crowd, with some waiting for hours, transformed the Nordic venue into a lively celebration of Indian heritage to mark the third leg of the Prime Minister's five-nation European tour.

For many community members, catching a glimpse of the Indian leader was a lifetime milestone. Attendees expressed deep pride in India's global growth, with some singing traditional songs and others extending spiritual greetings. Local residents described the high-profile visit as a dream come true, emphasizing the strong bond the diaspora maintains with New Delhi.

The enthusiastic reception sets a vibrant stage for Modi's high-stakes, two-day official visit, which comes at the personal invitation of Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson. This marks Modi's first trip to the Nordic nation since 2018. The two leaders are scheduled to hold comprehensive bilateral talks to map out a stronger strategic alliance for the future.

GLOBAL EBOLA ALERT

WHO declares Ebola as global health emergency

GENEVA

The World Health Organization has declared the expanding Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda a public health emergency of international concern. The decision follows the rapid spread of the rare Bundibugyo virus strain, which has recently breached borders to infect patients in the major capital cities of Kampala and Kinshasa.

Medical data shows a worrying situation on the ground. Health officials documented eight confirmed cases, 246 suspected infections, and 80 suspected deaths across the DRC's Ituri Province. Compounding the crisis, four healthcare workers have died from the hemorrhagic fever, raising serious alarms over hospital safety and tracking gaps. The WHO warned that

World Health Organization

a very high testing positivity rate points to a much larger, undetected outbreak thriving amidst regional conflict and mass migration.

Unlike more common Ebola strains, there are currently no approved vaccines or targeted treatments for the Bundibugyo virus, making global coordination absolutely critical. Neighboring countries sharing land borders with the DRC face extreme transmission risks due to busy trade routes.

Despite the high threat levels, the WHO firmly directed nations not to close international borders or restrict global travel and trade. Health experts argued that border closures are driven by fear rather than science, warning that blockades inadvertently push desperate travelers toward unmonitored, informal crossings. Instead, the global body urged nations to boost community disease awareness and prepare medical evacuation plans for emergency responders.

QUICK READ

Delhi Metro to add extra train trips every Monday

New Delhi

In a major push to encoura ge the use of public tra nsport and reduce depen dence on private vehicles, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Sunday announced a series of measures, including additional train trips, enhan ced security arran gemen ts, and expanded commuter facilities across the Delhi-NCR net work. According to the DMRC, 24 additional train trips will be introduced every Monday beginning May 18 thro ugh the deployment of six extra trains.

Govt launches advanced footwear testing lab

New Delhi

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs on Sunday said the National Test House (NTH), Northern Region, Ghaziabad, has significantly upgraded its footwear testing capabilities with the establishment of a modern Shoe Testing La boratory equipped with advanced instruments and infrastructure. The advanced facility is aimed at strengthening India's quality assurance infrastru cture and boosting the competitiveness of the country's fast-growing footwear industry. The la boratory has been set up to conduct comprehensive quality testing for a wide range of footwear products in accordance with relevant Indian Stand ards (IS). The ministry said the facility will help ensure that footwear products meet essential quality benchmarks related to durability, comfort, safety and performance.

Adani launches 'ACE' eye hospital for affordable care

Patna

Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani on Sunday announced the launch of 'ACE - Adani Centre for Eye Diseases' in collaboration with Akhand Jyoti Hospital and the Adani Foundation, saying the initiative aims to provide accessible and affordable eye treatment to people in need. He also said that ATOM - Adani Training Centre for Ophthalmic Medicine will help prepare a new generation of eye specialists and women healthcare workers. We are joining hands with Adani Foundation and Akhand Jyoti Hospital to launch 'ACE - Adani Centre for Eye Diseases, which will be a major effort to provide accessible and affordable eye care to those in need, Gautam Adani said.

'Ind-Netherlands RE tie to boost clean energy Innovation'

'Two countries would open new economic opportunities while reinforcing India's commitment towards sustainable growth, energy security, cleaner future'

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi on Sunday highlighted the growing cooperation between India and the Netherlands in the fields of renewable energy, green hydrogen and energy transition.

In a post shared on social media platform X, Joshi said that collaboration between the two countries would open new economic opportunities while reinforcing India's commitment towards sustainable growth, energy security and a cleaner future.

He emphasized that the partnership would play an important role in accelerating the transition towards cleaner sources of energy and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

According to the minister, cooperation in renewable energy and green hydrogen would help both nations exchange expertise and promote industrial partnerships in emerging sectors linked to clean energy development. He noted that the partnership aligns with India's larger vision of becoming a leading player in the global clean energy market.

As part of the cooperation framework, India and the Netherlands will establish a Joint Working Group on Renewable Energy. The group will conduct regular meetings to exchange best practices, share experiences and improve understanding of each other's industrial ecosystems. The initiative is expected to encourage collaboration in areas such as green hydrogen, bioenergy, bio-chemicals, circular feedstocks, renewable energy technologies and battery storage solutions.

Both countries have also agreed to jointly prepare an action plan focused on renewable hydrogen development. A major highlight of the partnership is the proposed creation of a green corridor between India and the Netherlands. The corridor is expected to strengthen clean energy trade links and support India's plans to become a major exporter of green hydrogen to European markets.

In addition to renewable energy cooperation, India and the Netherlands will also work together on climate-related initiatives through another Joint Working Group dedicated to climate adaptation and mitigation. The partnership aims to promote the exchange of technology, knowledge and best practices for addressing global climate challenges and supporting sustainable environmental development.

Top firms lose Rs 3.12L cr in market value amid equity sell-off

MUMBAI

Nine of India's top-10 most valued companies together lost Rs 3.12 lakh crore in market valuation last week as domestic equity markets witnessed a sharp correction amid rising geopolitical tensions, weakness in the rupee and increasing crude oil prices.

Investor sentiment remained weak throughout the week, leading to heavy selling pressure across sectors in the stock market. The benchmark 30-share Sensex declined by 2,090.2 points, or 2.7 per cent, during the week, while the Nifty fell by 532.65 points, or 2.2 per cent. Analysts attributed the decline to concerns over global uncertainties, rising energy costs and cautious investor participation.

Among the country's 10 most valued companies, Bharti Airtel emerged as the only firm to register gains in market capitalisation during the week. The telecom major added Rs 42,470.13 crore to its valuation, taking its overall market worth to Rs 11,60,525.16 crore. The gains reflected continued investor confidence in the telecom sector and strong growth expectations for the company.

On the other hand, State Bank of India witnessed the sharpest decline in valuation among the leading firms. The bank's market capitalisation dropped by Rs 52,245.3 crore to Rs 8,88,862.32 crore. Tata Consultancy Services also suffered significant losses, with its valuation declining by Rs 47,415.04 crore to Rs 8,19,062.65 crore. Bajaj Finance recorded a decline of Rs 27,892.28 crore, reducing its market value to Rs 5,66,717.74 crore. HDFC Bank, which continued to remain among the country's most valued companies, saw its market capitalisation slip by Rs 20,630.01 crore to Rs 11,82,069.25 crore.

India-EFTA trade pact expands investment opportunities

NEW DELHI

The pact marks a defining step in India's deeper integration with developed global markets and strengthens its long-term economic strategy

The Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) between India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), which came into effect on October 1, 2025.

The article stated that the agreement reflects India's growing stature as a confident global economic power capable of negotiating balanced, future-oriented and investment-linked trade partnerships with advanced economies. It added that the pact marks a defining step in India's deeper integration with developed global markets and strengthens its long-term economic strategy.

The agreement aims to attract investments worth 100 billion dollars and generate one million jobs in India over the next 15 years. Bilateral trade between India and the EFTA bloc reached 24.4 billion dollars during the financial year 2024-25, highlighting the growing economic engagement between the two sides. Under the pact, tariff concessions cover nearly 99.6 per cent of India's exports, offering significant market access benefits for Indian businesses and industries.

The EFTA bloc consists of four highly developed European countries — Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. Although these nations are not members of the European Union, they are known for their advanced industrial capabilities, innovation-driven economies, strong financial sectors and transparent regulatory systems. Their high purchasing power and focus on technology and sustainability make them valuable economic partners for India.

According to the article, TEPA is India's first comprehensive free trade agreement with a group of advanced European economies. This elevates the significance of the agreement beyond traditional tariff reductions and positions it as a strategic partnership focused on investment, technology transfer, sustainability and advanced manufacturing.

The article further noted that the timing of the agreement is particularly important amid rising geopolitical tensions, disruptions in global supply chains and changing international trade patterns. Ongoing strategic competition between major global powers and concerns over overdependence on single-market supply chains have created uncertainty in the global economy.

Against this backdrop, TEPA is seen as a symbol of strategic reassurance and demonstrates that economic cooperation based on mutual trust and shared prosperity can continue despite global challenges. The agreement also reflects India's broader strategy of diversifying trade partnerships and positioning itself as a stable, reliable and rules-based destination for global investments.

PM's UAE visit sends strong signal of businesses growth

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the UAE amid the geopolitical and economic uncertainty in the wake of the West Asia conflict has sent a strong signal of stability and growth opportunities for businesses operating across the India-UAE corridor, according to a report in Dubai-headquartered Gulf News.

The report cites Nikai Group chairman Paras Shahdadpuri as saying, For the business community, this continued engagement between both nations sends a very positive message. It reinforces a shared vision for growth, innovation, and long-term collaboration across sectors such as trade, infrastructure, energy, and technology. The relationship between India and the UAE continues to deepen, creating meaningful opportunities for businesses, investors, and communities in both countries.

Zubin Karkaria, founder and CEO of VFS Global, said the visit highlights the strength of the India-UAE relationship during a period of changing global alignments. The agreements announced across defence cooperation, energy security and infrastructure development show how the relationship is expanding into broader strategic areas, he added.

At a time of shifting geopolitical alignments and economic uncertainty, the agreements announced across defence cooperation, energy security and infrastructure development highlight how the partnership is evolving into a key pillar of regional and global stability, he said. The report also quotes Azad Moopen, founder chairman of Aster DM Healthcare, as stating that PM Modi's visit could open up further opportunities in healthcare collaboration and talent exchange across the Gulf region. According to the report, Dubai-based Al Maya expects the agreements signed during PM Modi's visit to lead to further strengthening of commercial ties between India and the UAE.

For Al Maya Group, a proud part of this bilateral story for over five decades, these agreements inspire us to contribute even more meaningfully to this extraordinary relationship. PM Modi's visit powerfully reaffirms the strength and depth of the India-UAE partnership, said Kamal Vachani, Deputy CEO and Group Director of Al Maya Group.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Friday agreed to promote new initiatives for a comprehensive energy partnership. In this context, they welcomed the conclusion of a Strategic Collaboration Agreement between Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company to enhance the UAE's participation in India's Strategic Petroleum Reserves to 30 million barrels and work together to set up strategic gas reserves in India.

Delhi cuts VAT on aviation turbine fuel from 25% to 7%

NEW DELHI

The Delhi government Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has decided to reduce the VAT rate on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) in the National Capital Region from 25 per cent to 7 per cent, an official said.

This concessional rate will initially be applicable for a period of six months and may help in preventing a spike in airfares in view of the global oil supply disruption due to the Iran conflict, said the official. In another development, Chief Minister Gupta attended a felicitation and free bicycle distribution programme for meritorious girl students in the R. K. Puram Assembly constituency.

During the event, bicycles were distributed to girls who had passed Classes 10 and 12 so that they could continue their education with greater ease, safety and self-reliance, said a statement.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said such efforts are extremely important for promoting girls' education and encouraging them to move ahead in life.

Calling the initiative an inspiring step towards women's empowerment, she praised the organisers for their efforts. Chief Minister Gupta said the education of daughters is important for families and the foundation of a brighter future for society and the nation.

India strengthens semiconductor push with Tata-ASML ties

NEW DELHI

India's semiconductor ambitions received a major boost as Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted a new partnership between Tata Electronics and ASML aimed at strengthening the country's chip manufacturing ecosystem.

The agreement was witnessed by Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten and PM Modi during high-level engagements focused on futuristic technologies and innovation-led cooperation.

Under the memorandum of understanding, ASML will support the establishment and expansion of Tata Electronics' upcoming semiconductor facility in Dholera, marking a significant step in India's efforts to emerge as a global semiconductor manufacturing hub. The collaboration is expected to bring advanced expertise and technology support to the ambitious project in Gujarat. In a post on social media platform X, PM Modi described the partnership as an important milestone in boosting India's semiconductor ecosystem and deepening international cooperation in advanced sectors. He emphasised that India's rapid progress in semiconductors is opening up immense opportunities for the country's youth and creating a strong foundation for future innovation and employment.

IGL raises CNG prices again as fuel costs continue to rise in Delhi-NCR

NEW DELHI

India's leading city gas distributor, Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL), on Sunday increased compressed natural gas (CNG) prices by Re 1 per kg across its network, marking the second price hike within 48 hours and adding further pressure on commuters and transport operators in the Delhi-NCR region.

With the latest revision, the price of CNG in Delhi has risen to Rs 80.09 per kg, crossing the Rs 80 mark for the first time. In Noida and Ghaziabad, the revised price now stands at Rs 88.70 per kg. The increase comes just two days after IGL had raised CNG prices by Rs 2 per kg on May 15, when rates in Delhi had climbed to Rs 79.09 per kg.

The repeated hikes are expected to increase transportation expenses for private vehicle owners, taxi operators and public transport users who depend heavily on CNG as a relatively economical fuel option. Auto-rickshaw drivers, cab aggregators and small transport businesses are likely to feel the impact of the rising fuel costs in the coming days.

The latest rise in CNG prices coincides with a broader revision in retail fuel rates announced by the Central government on May 15. Petrol prices in the national capital were increased by around Rs 3 per litre, while diesel prices also went up by nearly Rs 3 per litre. Following the revision, petrol in Delhi is being sold at Rs 97.77 per litre and diesel at Rs 90.67 per litre.

The increase in fuel prices comes amid rising geopolitical tensions in West Asia and the ongoing blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most crucial energy trade routes. A significant portion of global oil and gas supplies passes through the narrow maritime corridor, and disruptions in the region have led to a sharp increase in international crude oil prices.

Responding to criticism over the fuel price hike, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju stated that India has managed to keep petrol and diesel price increases relatively limited despite the steep rise in global crude oil prices. He pointed out that several countries have witnessed fuel price increases ranging from 20 per cent to almost 100 per cent, whereas India's petrol and diesel prices have risen by only 3.2 per cent and 3.4 per cent respectively.

Rijiju further said that even after Brent crude crossed the 100 dollars per barrel mark and international energy markets turned volatile, public sector oil marketing companies in India absorbed substantial losses for several weeks to reduce the inflationary impact on consumers.

'FREE' TO 'RESTRICTED'

Govt imposes fresh curbs on silver imports

NEW DELHI

India has tightened oversight of silver imports by shifting several categories of the precious metal from the free import policy regime to the restricted category, according to a fresh government notification issued on Saturday.

Under the revised framework, imports of silver bars with 99.9 per cent purity, unwrought silver, semi-manufactured silver and silver powder will now require prior government approval before shipments can enter the country. Certain categories of imports will also continue to fall under Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulations, adding stricter financial compliance requirements for importers.

The changes have been introduced through amendments to the import policy schedule under the ITC (HS) classification and take immediate effect.

The move marks a significant tightening of control over the silver supply chain, covering a wide range of products used across industrial, manufacturing and investment segments. Until now, most of these categories were imported under the free regime, which allowed shipments with standard regulatory clearances and limited restrictions. With the latest notification, importers will now have to seek explicit approval from authorities before bringing in consignments of bullion-grade silver and semi-processed silver products. Industry observers believe the step is aimed at improving monitoring of precious metal inflows and curbing excessive imports.

The latest curbs come amid the government's broader push to reduce pressure on India's import bill and strengthen oversight of precious metals trade. Earlier, the Centre had increased import duties on gold and silver to 15 percent from 6 percent.

In parallel, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) recently tightened rules governing duty-free gold imports under the Advance Authorisation (AA) scheme used by gems and jewellery exporters. Under the revised norms, gold imports under the AA scheme have been capped at 100 kilograms per licence.

RCB Storm Into IPL Playoffs With 23-Run Win Over PBKS

DHARAMSHALA

Royal Challengers Bengaluru sealed their place in the IPL 2026 playoffs with a commanding 23-run victory over Punjab Kings in Dharamshala on Sunday.

Kohli, Venkatesh and Bhuvneshwar shine as Bengaluru confirm playoff qualification.

Powered by impressive batting performances from Virat Kohli, Venkatesh Iyer and Devdutt Padikkal, RCB posted a formidable total of 222 for 4 in 20 overs before their bowlers ensured Punjab Kings fell short at 199 for 8.

Kohli continued his excellent form with a fluent 58 off 37 balls, while Padikkal contributed 45 runs to provide RCB a solid foundation after the early loss of a wicket. The pair stitched together a crucial 76-run partnership for the second wicket.

Venkatesh Iyer then accelerated the innings brilliantly with an unbeaten 73 off just 40 deliveries. His aggressive strokeplay, combined with Kohli's stability, helped Bengaluru dominate the latter half of the innings and finish with one of the highest totals of the season.

In reply, Punjab Kings suffered an early collapse after pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar removed dangerous openers Priyansh Arya and Prabhsimran Singh cheaply. RCB tightened their grip further when Rasikh Salam dismissed Punjab skipper Shreyas Iyer for just one run.

Punjab were reduced to 19 for 3 within four overs and struggled to recover from the disastrous start. Late resistance from Shashank Singh, who smashed 56 off 27 balls, and Marcus Stoinis, who scored 37, briefly revived hopes but the target proved too steep.

Bhuvneshwar finished with figures of 2 for 38, while Rasikh Salam claimed three wickets as RCB registered another convincing win.

The victory takes Royal Challengers Bengaluru into the playoffs and strengthens their position at the top of the points table heading into the final phase of the league stage.

Narine Hails KKR's Hard Work after Dominant Win over GT

Sunil Narine credited Kolkata Knight Riders' hard work and preparation after the team registered a commanding victory over Gujarat Titans.

KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders all-rounder Sunil Narine praised his teammates for their dedication and preparation following KKR's impressive 29-run win over Gujarat Titans in the Indian Premier League 2026.

KKR produced a complete all-round display at the Eden Gardens, with explosive batting performances from Finn Allen, Angkrish Raghuvanshi and Cameron Green before Narine led the bowling attack with another impactful spell.

Narine said the team's success was the result of sustained effort and hard work during training sessions. He expressed confidence that KKR could continue their winning momentum regardless of how the remainder of the tournament unfolds.

"I think it comes with hard work. The guys have been preparing really well and putting in the hard yards, so it's showing," Narine said after the victory.

The experienced all-rounder also achieved a major personal milestone during the game, becoming the first overseas player and the 13th cricketer overall to complete 200 appearances in IPL history. Reflecting on the achievement, Narine described the journey as a blessing and hoped to continue contributing to KKR for many more seasons.

KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane lauded the aggressive approach shown by the batting unit, particularly Finn Allen and Angkrish Raghuvanshi. Allen smashed a sensational 93 off just 35 deliveries, while Raghuvanshi struck 82 from 44 balls to put Gujarat Titans under immense pressure early in the innings. Cameron Green further strengthened the innings with an unbeaten 52 off 28 balls as KKR posted a massive total of 247 runs.

Delhi Capitals assistant coach Ian Bell has blamed the team's unstable batting lineup for its disappointing IPL 2026 campaign

DC Pay Price for Batting Instability, Says Ian Bell

NEW DELHI

Delhi Capitals assistant coach Ian Bell has admitted that the franchise's inconsistent batting performances have been the biggest reason behind the team's disappointing campaign in IPL 2026. With the tournament entering its crucial phase, Bell said the lack of stability in the batting order has prevented Delhi from building momentum and competing consistently against stronger teams.

Delhi Capitals are currently placed eighth on the points table with only 10 points from 12 matches, leaving their playoff hopes hanging by a thread. Ahead of their crucial clash against Rajasthan Royals at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Bell stressed that successful IPL teams are usually built around a settled batting lineup, something Delhi have struggled to achieve this season.

According to Bell, frequent changes in combinations and the failure of middle-order batters to deliver consistently have hurt the side in pressure situations. He pointed out that the top four teams in the league have largely maintained stable batting units, allowing players to settle into defined roles and perform with confidence.

"One of the biggest differences when you look at the top teams is the consistency in their batting lineup. We are still working towards finding that stability," Bell said during the pre-match interaction.

Despite the disappointing campaign, Bell identified KL Rahul as one of the few major positives for Delhi Capitals this season. Rahul has not only scored important runs but has also improved his strike rate significantly, answering criticism about his scoring tempo in T20 cricket.

Bell praised Rahul for adapting his game and showing greater attacking intent but admitted that the team cannot depend entirely on one batter. He added that no other player in the lineup has managed to make himself "undroppable" through consistent performances.

With only a few league matches remaining, Delhi Capitals now face immense pressure to win their remaining fixtures to stay alive in the playoff race. Their encounter against Rajasthan Royals could prove decisive in determining whether their IPL 2026 journey continues or ends prematurely.

PCB Chief Invited for IPL Final, ICC Meeting in Ahmedabad

AHMEDABAD

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi has received an invitation to attend the Indian Premier League final and the International Cricket Council Board Meeting scheduled for May 30 and 31 in Ahmedabad, marking a rare instance of sporting engagement between India and Pakistan amid strained bilateral relations.

The invitation is being seen as an important symbolic gesture in cricketing circles, considering the political and sporting tensions that have long impacted cricket ties between the two neighbouring countries. The ICC Board Meeting will coincide with the IPL 2026 final and is expected to bring together senior cricket administrators from across the world to discuss key issues concerning the future of the sport.

However, Naqvi's possible visit to India remains uncertain as the final decision will reportedly rest with Shehbaz Sharif and the Pakistani government. Due to the sensitive political nature of India-Pakistan relations, any high-profile visit by a senior Pakistani official requires approval at the highest level.

If the visit is cleared, Naqvi's attendance at the IPL final would represent a rare occasion where a Pakistan Cricket Board chief witnesses India's premier T20 tournament in person. Cricket observers believe such interactions could help maintain communication channels between the two cricket boards despite the absence of bilateral cricket between the nations in recent years.

The ICC Board Meeting itself is expected to focus on several important topics, including international cricket scheduling, revenue-sharing models, governance reforms and the future structure of global tournaments. With administrators from major cricketing nations set to participate, the meeting is likely to shape several decisions impacting the sport over the coming years.

Viral Post Sparks False Death Rumour Around Afghan Cricketer Rahmat Shah

KABUL

A viral social media post falsely claiming the death of Afghanistan cricketer Rahmat Shah created widespread confusion among cricket fans after an incorrect translation of an Instagram condolence message circulated online.

The misunderstanding began when Afghanistan all-rounder Karim Janat shared a condolence post in Pashto on Instagram. The platform's automated English translation incorrectly suggested that Rahmat Shah himself had passed away, leading to panic and speculation across social media platform X and other online forums.

The mistranslated version of the post described Rahmat Shah as having died and offered condolences to his family, causing many users to believe the experienced Afghanistan batter had passed away at the age of 32.

However, further clarification later revealed that the condolence message was actually intended for Rahmat Shah's mother, who had reportedly passed away recently. The original Pashto text expressed sympathy to Rahmat and his family over the death of his mother and prayed for strength and patience during the difficult time. Once the correct translation surfaced online, fans expressed relief after learning that Rahmat Shah was safe and healthy. Many social media users also criticised the spread of misinformation and highlighted the dangers of relying entirely on automated translations without proper verification.

The incident once again underlined how mistranslations and unverified social media posts can quickly create confusion, especially involving public figures and celebrities. Several cricket fans urged users to verify information from official sources before sharing sensitive news online.

Rahmat Shah remains one of Afghanistan's most experienced cricketers and has been an important figure in the national side across formats. The batter last represented Afghanistan during an ODI series against Bangladesh last year before suffering an injury that ruled him out of the final match of the series.

Meanwhile, messages of support and condolences continued to pour in for Rahmat Shah and his family following confirmation of his mother's death. The Afghanistan cricket fraternity and fans across the world extended prayers and support to the veteran batter during the difficult period.

Virat Kohli Praises Women's Cricket Growth, Reflects on RCB Title Triumph

NEW DELHI

Former India skipper Virat Kohli has hailed the transformation of women's cricket in India and expressed admiration for the new generation of cricketers redefining the modern game.

Kohli reflected on leadership, longevity, the evolution of T20 cricket and the emotional significance of RCB finally winning their maiden IPL title.

Kohli praised Smriti Mandhana for her elegant batting and ability to perform under pressure on major occasions. He described her as a naturally gifted batter whose timing and strokeplay make her one of the most exciting players to watch in world cricket.

The star batter also lauded Jemimah Rodrigues for her resilience and mental strength during a challenging tournament. Kohli said Rodrigues displayed remarkable composure and focus despite the pressure of facing strong opposition on the big stage.

"There's no doubt Smriti has always had unique talent. She is an amazing timer of the ball," Kohli said, adding that Jemimah's fearless attitude and concentration reflected her tremendous character.

Kohli also spoke about how his perspective towards cricket has evolved over the years. The former India captain said he has now reached a stage in his career where impact and influence matter more to him than records and statistics. According to Kohli, the purpose of playing cricket now lies in inspiring people and contributing positively to the game.

Reflecting on Royal Challengers Bengaluru's long-awaited IPL triumph, Kohli described the title victory as one of the most emotional moments of his cricketing journey.

Tim David Backs Kohli's Temperament after Lean Patch

DHARAMSHALA

Royal Challengers Bengaluru batter Tim David has lauded Virat Kohli's composure and professionalism after the veteran batter bounced back strongly from two low scores earlier this season with a match-winning century against Kolkata Knight Riders.

David said Kohli never appeared mentally affected during his brief dip in form and maintained the same positive approach throughout.

"To be honest, he doesn't change. You wouldn't have known he had two ducks unless you had been watching TV," David said while interacting with broadcasters before the match.

Kohli recently silenced criticism by scoring a brilliant century against Kolkata Knight Riders, reaffirming his status as one of the most dependable batters in the tournament. David said the hundred was not only important for Kohli personally but also a major boost for the franchise and its supporters. The Australian power-hitter also highlighted that Royal Challengers Bengaluru's strong campaign this season has been built on collective performances rather than depending solely on one individual. According to David, several players have stepped up at different stages to help the team remain among the top sides in the competition.

David praised RCB's top-order batters for playing fearless cricket and putting opposition bowlers under pressure early in the innings. He said their aggressive yet controlled approach has given the middle-order greater freedom and confidence to play according to the match situation.

"At the top, we have some really classy players who express themselves confidently and play aggressive cricketing shots," David added.

Chelsea Appoint Xabi Alonso as Head Coach on Four-Year Deal

LONDON

Chelsea FC on Sunday appointed Xabi Alonso as their new head coach on a four-year contract, marking the Spaniard's return to management following his disappointing stint with Real Madrid CF. Alonso will officially take charge on July 1 as the replacement for Liam Rosenior, who was dismissed last month. The former Spain midfielder becomes the fifth permanent manager appointed by Chelsea's ownership group led by Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital since their takeover of the club in 2022.

Alonso's appointment comes just months after he left Real Madrid by mutual consent following an underwhelming eight-month spell. Reports in Spanish media had suggested poor results and dressing-room issues contributed to his exit, damaging the reputation he had built during a hugely successful tenure at Bayer 04 Leverkusen, where he guided the club to a Bundesliga title and an unbeaten domestic season in 2023-24.

Arshdeep Unaffected by Social Media Criticism, Says PBKS Management

DHARAMSHALA

Punjab Kings management has backed fast bowler Arshdeep Singh amid social media criticism surrounding his recent comments on fellow Indian cricketer Tilak Varma, insisting that the left-arm pacer has remained unaffected by the outside noise during a crucial stage of IPL 2026.

Head of Sports Science Andrew Leipus said Arshdeep's attitude and behaviour within the dressing room had remained positive and consistent despite the online reaction.

"In terms of his behaviour, Arsh is pretty much a flat line. He's not up or down. He gives his best out there and has been very consistent with his attitude," Leipus said.

Arshdeep recently found himself under scrutiny after a viral video involving comments directed at Tilak Varma circulated widely on social media platforms.

The situation intensified further after screenshots of an alleged online response by the pacer also began trending online, drawing criticism from some fans.

However, according to the Punjab Kings support staff, the controversy has not impacted Arshdeep's confidence or his role within the team environment. Leipus described the pacer as one of the most energetic personalities in the squad and praised his leadership qualities both on and off the field.

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